GUITAR GIRL MAGAZINE

Summer Issue
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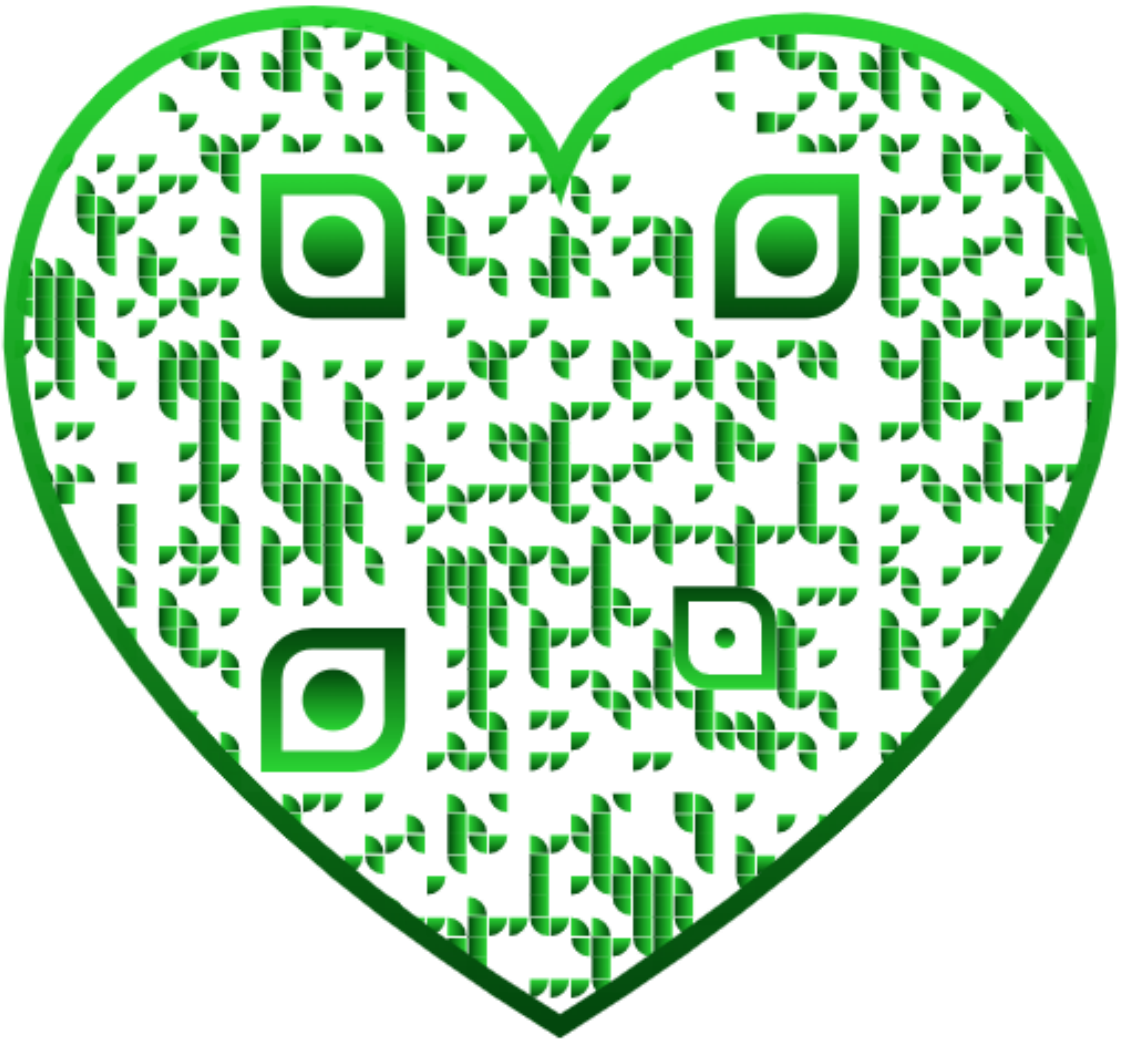
THE AUSTIN MUSIC SCENE

JACKIE Venson

LUNA
FENDER
MARTIN GUITAR
PAUL REED SMITH

SUE FOLEY
GINA CHAVEZ
ROSIE FLORES
PATTI QUATRO
RUTHIE FOSTER
TERRI HENDRIX
KATHY VALENTINE
AND MORE ...



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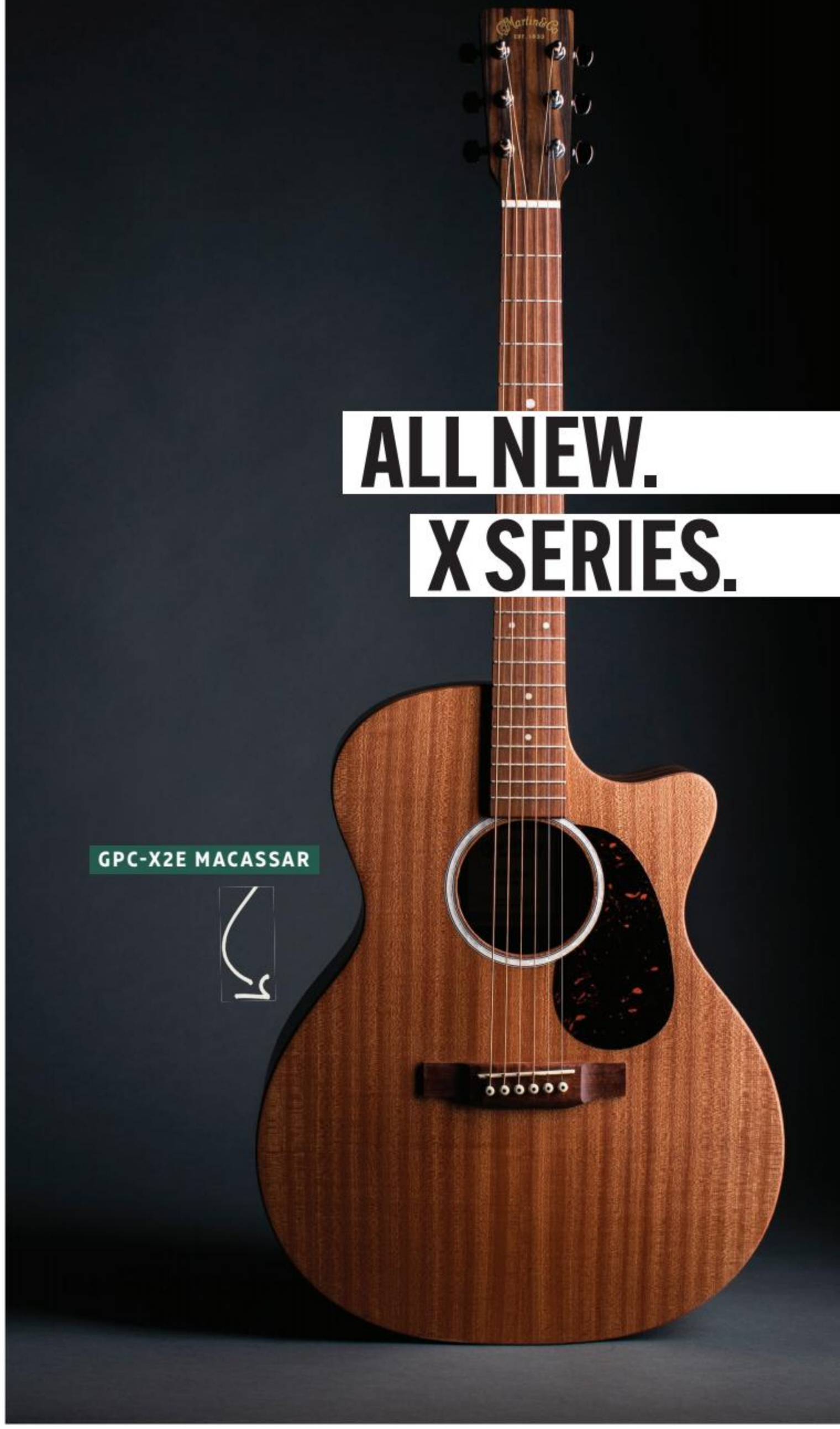

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TARA TALK

Austin, Texas

The Live Music Capital of the World®

When I set our Editorial Calendar for 2020, I wanted to focus on specific cities, with the first being Los Angeles (Southern California) following Winter NAMM. Next in line is Austin, known as the Live Music Capital of the World, home to SXSW, *Austin City Limits*, and the University of Texas at Austin Guitar Program. As SXSW was canceled with the onset of COVID-19, we still had plenty to focus on in Austin. In this edition, we delve into the lives of quite a few musicians who call Austin home and take a look at the local music scene and the impact of COVID-19.

On the cover is Austin native **Jackie Venson**, where she talks about her musical inspiration, songwriting, and her Gibson she named Rosetta. Other Austin residents we had the opportunity to learn more about are **Sue Foley** on her move to Austin, blues, and her current rig; **Ruthie Foster** talks songwriting and her newest album; **Kathy Valentine** talks about writing her memoir; **Rosie Flores** fills us in on her background in music and her newest album; and **Patti Quatro** and **Lzzy Hale** chat it up on life as women in the music industry. But that's not all; we have several more!

The Texas state motto is "Friendship," and I found a common thread among a lot of the musicians we interviewed—most of them are connected somehow and are friends.

We take a look at Janis Joplin's time at Threadgill's, which unfortunately has permanently closed its doors. Texas is known for its own version of blues, so we offer up lessons on twelve-bar blues and ways to approach Stevie Ray Vaughan's style.

For reviews, we got our hands on some pretty cool gear, including the new Martin SC-13E that was introduced at Winter NAMM, as well as Luna's new Safari Koa Supreme, Fender's Jazzmaster ukulele, and Paul Reed Smith's new parlor guitar.

I have personally had such a great experience learning more about Austin and their great music scene—and look forward to SXSW 2021!

~ Tara Low

GUITAR GIRL MAGAZINE

ENCOURAGE. INSPIRE. EMPOWER.

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GUITAR GIRL MAGAZINE 2020 CALENDAR

Guitar Girl Magazine's 2020 calendar is a beautiful wall calendar.
This 11 x 8.5-inch calendar features the extremely talented Ariel Bellvalaire on the cover, followed by 12 months each showcasing a fabulous female guitar player followed by a bonus four-month pre-planner for 2021 and two pages for notes.

Order yours today for $14.99 on our site at GuitarGirlMag.com.

JANUARY
Ariel Bellvalaire

FEBRUARY
Angie Swan

MARCH
Britt Lightning

APRIL
Alicia Vigil

MAY
Emily Ruvidich

JUNE
Lexii Lynn Frazier

JULY
Nikki Stringfield

AUGUST
Kiki Wongo

SEPTEMBER
Candice Levinson

OCTOBER
Jules Whelpton

NOVEMBER
Keona Lee

DECEMBER
Courtney Cox aka CC Shred

JAN/FEB 2021
Lynnay Della Lucé

MAR/APR 2021
Marla'O

NOTES
Rose Cora Perry

NOTES
Briana Alexis

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COMMUNITY

SHE Said

"Find out what your sound is and focus on honing that. If your live show really kicks ass, people can't help but notice."

~ Emily Wolfe, Interview in *Guitar Girl Magazine Autumn 2019*

KEEP AUST IN WEIRD

HEALTH ALLIANCE FOR AUSTIN MUSICIANS

CELEBRATING 15 YEARS

The Health Alliance for Austin Musicians aids in providing healthcare for low-income working musicians in the Austin area. For more information, check out: https://myhaam.org/

Thank you for all your support for women in music!

- Alice G.

Very cool! Guitar Girl, it's about time. I am hearing more and more young female guitarists than ever before, and from every genre you can imagine. Refreshing, to say the least.

-Jerry Cortez
Tower of Power

CELEBRATE
AFRICAN-AMERICAN MUSIC APPRECIATION MONTH

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Collings GUITARS

On the outskirts of Austin is Bill Collings' living dream of outstanding guitars with meticulous attention to detail. Since the 1980s, **Collings Guitars** has been offering acoustic, electric, archtop, and mandolins of extraordinary quality. In 2014, **Waterloo Guitars** were added to offer vintage-inspired guitars. Since its inception, Collings Guitars have been in the hands of some of the most prominent players, including Joni Mitchell, Shawn Colvin, Sarah Jarosz, Ruth Moody, Emily Strayer, Greta Pedersen, Gretchen Wolaver, Aoife O'Donovan, ZZ Ward, Adrianne Lenker, and Madison Cunningham.

Sarah Jarosz performing at The Triple Door in July 2012 Photo by Kirk Stauffer

Ruth Moody performing at Benaroya Hall in December 2014 Photo by Kirk Stauffer

Madison Cunningham at SXSW 2019 Photo by Kirk Stauffer

Brand Carlile performs with her 01 SB for Women on a Roll, Santa Monica, CA. Photo by Sherry Rayn Barnett

ZZ Ward performing at Bumbershoot in September 2018 Photo by Kirk Stauffer

Joan Shelley at Collings Guitars office Photo by Collings Guitars

Jill Sobule with her Collings Baby 2H performing at Concert on the Lawn Photo by Sherry Rayn Barnett

Adrianne Lenker of Big Foot at Haldern Pop Festival in August 2018 Photo by Martin Schumann / Wikipedia / CC BY-SA (https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0)

Photo by Johnny Giles Muzic City Images

Shawn Colvin at
AMERICANAFEST 2019 at the
War Memorial Auditorium

SHAWN COLVIN

Debut album *Steady On* was released in 1989 and won a GRAMMY in 1991 for Best Contemporary Folk Album

A Few Small Repairs certified Platinum on March 31, 1998

Inducted into the Austin City Limits Hall of Fame in 2019

In 2019, released *Steady On* 30th Anniversary Acoustic Edition

Chart-topping hit single "Sunny Came Home" from 1996 album *A Few Small Repairs* won a GRAMMY in 1998 for Record of the Year and Song of the Year

Received the Lifetime Achievement Trailblazer Award at the Americana Honors and Awards Show in 2016

Started playing guitar at the age of ten

Released twelve albums and over fifteen singles

Wrote her memoir *Diamond in the Rough*, which was released in 2012

Martin Guitar released a limited edition Shawn Colvin Signature Edition M3SC in 2002

Dean Guitars MD 24 Select Series

Dean Guitars Colt Bigsby Electric Guitar

Cort A5 Plus SC Single-Cutaway Bass Guitar with Non-Multi-Scale Length

Cort Gold-OC8 Nylon Acoustic

Cort Guitars KC300 Etched Electric Guitar

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Orange Amplification Crest Edition Wireless Headphones

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Thompson Guitars Molly Tuttle Signature Guitar

Fender Parallel Universe Vol II Jazz Strat – Limited Edition

PRS SE Tonare Parlor Acoustics

Browne Amplification T4 Fuzz Pedal

J Rockett Broverdrive pedal

Phil Jones Bass C2

Zoom G11 Multi-effects unit

Ovation Adamas 6-String Cutaway Acoustic-Electric Guitar

Ovation Adamas Spalted Maple Acoustic-Electric Guitar

Luna Guitars Art Vintage Jumbo

COVID-19 AND THE MUSIC INDUSTRY:

LIFTING EACH OTHER UP WHEN WE'RE DOWN

The onslaught of COVID-19 has brought our world to its knees in a very short time. Three months ago, the novel coronavirus was surprising, but not something we worried about. Now, with everyone confined to their homes and states starting to reopen partially, it takes everything to *not* think about it. Everyone has been affected in one way or another—whether it's in worrying about a sick loved one or the loss of a job. The music industry is no exception.

For some people, the chance to be at home has provided time to invest in passions—bake bread, knit a sweater, write a book. You might think, *well, musicians have more time to write songs.* While this may be true, musicians make a living by sharing their work with others. The pandemic has meant that tours and in-person performances all over the world have been canceled. Musicians around the globe are being hit hard emotionally and financially (if this is you, check out this article on ways to make some extra money). Musicians can't continue making music—having all the time in the world or not—if they can't get the support they need to keep working.

With that said, the music community has never been a selfish one. In a world where so many people are eager to fend for themselves, the music industry has done the opposite. Struggling though we may be, the industry has banded together to help others and each other. Check out this list of fundraisers, benefits, and relief initiatives that are all working on getting musicians, music venues, and the general public through this craziness in one piece.

ORGANIZATIONAL RELIEF AND INITIATIVES FOR MUSICIANS

MusiCares Relief Fund

MusiCares is owned by The Recording Academy, which is widely known for televising Music's Biggest Night, the GRAMMY awards. MusiCares calls itself a *safety net* for people in the music industry, with resources to help with personal, financial, and medical emergencies.

Another goal of MusiCares is to direct more attention to issues like addiction—they even run an addiction recovery program, specifically designed for those in the music industry.

MusiCares has now dedicated resources to starting the *MusiCares COVID-19 Relief Fund*, which allows people to donate money to help musicians struggling to get by during the pandemic.

If you're a musician that's been affected by the pandemic, *MusiCares* has resources to help you get through, as well as a running newsfeed with pertinent relief information.

CARES Act

Another resource on the MusiCares website is a fact sheet on the CARES Act (Coronavirus Aid, Relief, Economic Security). This is a $2 trillion aid package put together by the United States government. While this act is not specifically designed for those in the music industry, musicians may be eligible for several of its benefits, which include:

- A pandemic assistance program for currently-unemployed, self-employed persons
  - Musicians can be considered self-employed. Since many have had gigs and tours canceled, they may be eligible to receive a sizeable amount of money per week on top of standard unemployment benefits.
- Small business administration loans
  - This is for self-employed workers (including musicians) and includes payment protection loans and Economic Injury Disaster Loans. Payment protection loans may be forgiven in full if an individual meets specific qualifications, and the advance on the EIDL does not need to be repaid if an individual qualifies for one.
- Seventy-five million dollars in a supplemental fund for the National Endowment of the Arts
  - Forty percent of this fund will be sent directly to regional/state arts committees and can be used to help local musicians who are struggling.

#SaveOurStages

#SaveOurStages is run by NIVA (National Independent Venue Association), an organization made up of over 1,300 independent music venues in the United States. All of them were entirely shut down for COVID-19 and will not likely be able to reopen until long after their larger competitors have done so. The independent venues are petitioning congressional leaders to change parts of COVID-19 legislation to help small businesses that have lost revenue during the pandemic. The proposed changes include modifications to:

- Small business loans
- Payment protection
- Tax relief
- Continued unemployment insurance
- Mortgage and rent forbearance

These changes would help venues survive the pandemic despite complete lack of revenue, and allow budding and seasoned musicians to continue to have places to shine. Hashtag #SaveOurStages to show your support, visit NIVA's website to donate to their cause, or get the attention of your local legislators.

BENEFIT CONCERTS

Many benefit concerts are put on to raise funds for musicians and other workers affected by COVID-19, or just to raise spirits. Examples include:

Martin Guitars' Jam in Place

Facebook Live series. Every afternoon on their Facebook page, Martin Guitars hosts a new artist performing from their home space. Past and future artists include Hunter Hayes, Jeff Slate, and Jim Roberti.

- **Keith Urban** hosted a drive-in concert to benefit front-line workers.
- Canadian singer **Tom Jackson** launched *Almighty Voices*, a twelve-episode variety show featuring and raising money for Canadian artists. Performers include Whitehorse, Myles Goodwyn, and Cynthia Dale.
- The Grateful Dead held weekly virtual concerts benefiting MusiCares' *Relief Fund*.
- CMT featured Tim McGraw, Faith Hill, and more country musicians for a virtual concert benefiting *Feed The Front Line*.
- The Opera Theatre of Saint Louis partnered with the St. Louis Shakespeare Festival for a free virtual concert, *Arts United STL*, to benefit the Regional Arts Commission's Artist Relief Fund.
- Here at *GuitarGirl Magazine*, we've hosted multiple benefits to raise money for MusiCares' *Relief Fund*. We hosted an all-day music marathon featuring spectacular female talent, as well as some advice on making music. We also hosted another Facebook Live featuring the amazing Ladies of the Canyon. We encouraged our audience to donate if they enjoyed the performances.

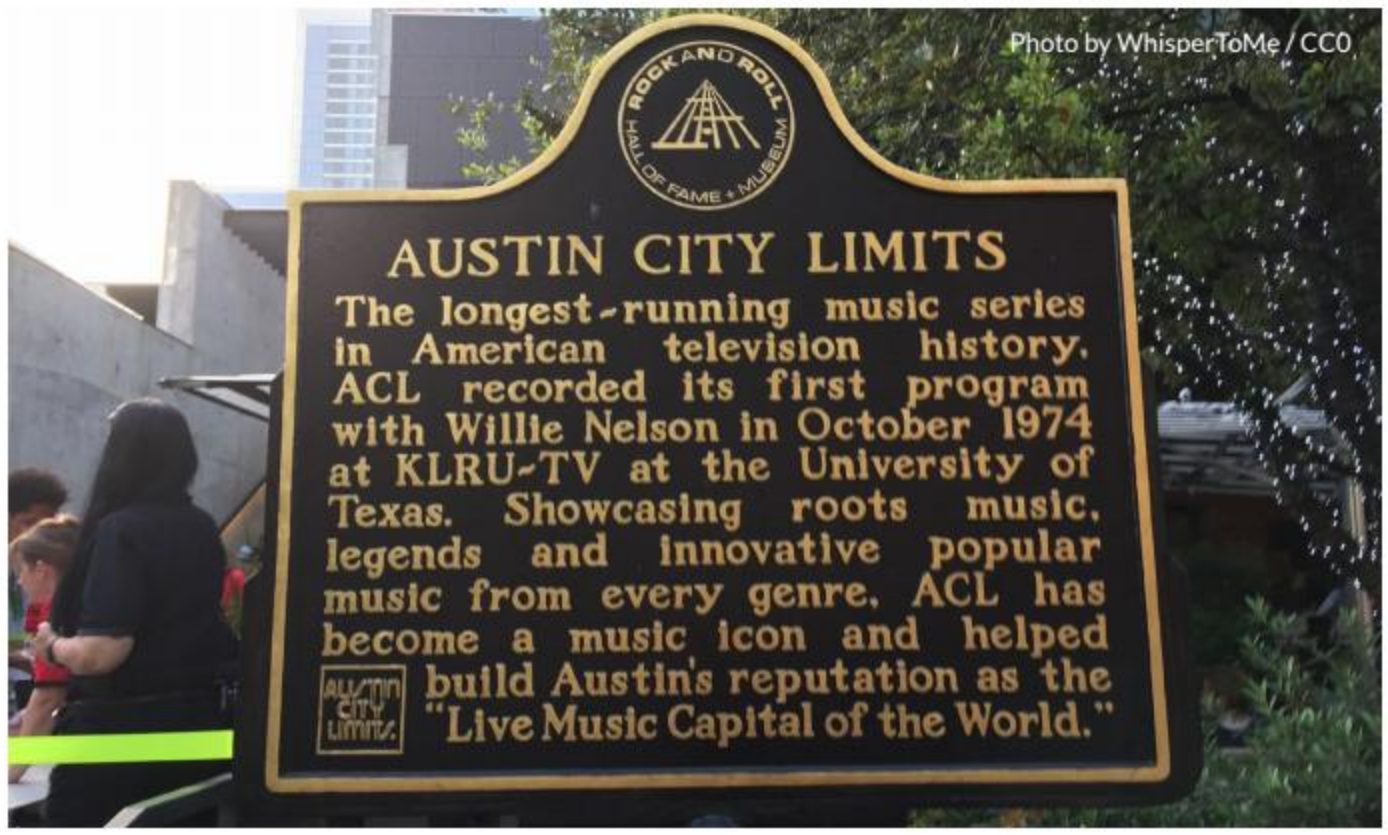
This is just a sampling of outlets for musicians to seek help and to show how our communities are pulling together. Our world has been struck. So many things have changed. In a time of immense struggle for the music community, we have seen tremendous support. The community that dedicates itself to bringing joy to the listener has continued to do so and has found a way to support each other in the process.

If you're able, donate to one of these lovely causes. If you're not, social media support is just as necessary to raise awareness. Stay safe, everyone, and keep listening to music.

Disclaimer: We are not in any way offering professional, financial, tax, or legal advice in this article, and the information contained herein should not be construed as such. This article is for informational purposes only, and the reader assumes responsibility for researching and performing due diligence before pursuing an action for relief.

The History, Representation, and Unmatched Success of Austin City Limits

By Victoria Shaffer


ROCK AND ROLL
HALL OF FAME + MUSEUM
AUSTIN CITY LIMITS
The longest-running music series in American television history. ACL recorded its first program with Willie Nelson in October 1974 at KLRU-TV at the University of Texas. Showcasing roots music, legends and innovative popular music from every genre, ACL has become a music icon and helped build Austin's reputation as the "Live Music Capital of the World."
AUSTIN CITY LIMITS
Photo by WhisperToMe / CC0

The longstanding and historic success of PBS' weekly live music show, *Austin City Limits* (ACL), is something not even its creators could have envisioned. Founded in 1974, and still airing, the TV show has broken records, breached genres, and continuously reminded us what good music sounds and feels like.

Featuring hundreds of musicians, from Bonnie Raitt and B.B. King to Radio Head and St. Vincent, ACL's 40-plus-year evolution has included numerous genres and memorable performances. Much to its credit, *Austin City Limits* is now the longest-running music program in television history and an important and vital component to the Austin music scene.

In 1974, PBS called for original programming from its member stations—this included KLRN-TV (later KLRU-TV) in Austin. *Austin City Limits* became the response to this request and was the brainchild of program director Bill Arhos, producer Paul Bosner, and director Bruce Scafe. Originally, ACL was intended to showcase Austin's musical diversity through country, folk, blues, and psychedelic acts. Its name, now a recognizable brand, came from a sign Bosner drove past each week on his commute from Dallas. Equipped with both a name and mission, the pilot for *Austin City Limits* was shot on October 17, 1974, and starred Willie Nelson.

Austin City Limits has experienced an evolution of music and featured genres since its inception. Still, one key element has remained and kept artists coming back: performers on ACL have freedom and control over what and how they sing and play. This freedom prompts authenticity and produces raw, unique, and captivating performances.

The show's many female artists include Joan Baez, Marcia Ball, Björk, Brandi Carlile, June Carter Cash, Rosanne Cash, Emmylou Harris, Sheryl Crow, the Dixie Chicks, Florence + the Machine, Indigo Girls, Etta James, Norah Jones, Miranda Lambert, Loretta Lynn, Kacey Musgraves, Dolly Parton, and more. This level of representation over numerous decades on a nationally broadcasted network aids in the growth of female artists receiving the exposure and accolades they have so long deserved.

Some of the male heavy hitters to take the ACL stage three or more times include Chet Atkins, Beck, Ray Charles, Guy Clark, Gary Clark Jr., Rodney Crowell, Charlie Daniels Band, Fats Domino, Vince Gill, Buddy Guy, Merle Haggard, Waylon Jennings, Los Lobos, Lyle Lovett, Willie Nelson, Carl Perkins, John Prine, Townes Van Zandt, Stevie Ray Vaughan & Double Trouble, and many others.

Austin City Limits' ability to encompass and represent such a broad scope of artists and musicians is a tribute to its creators, staff, and the Austin music scene. This inclusive and evolving element is what may also contribute to ACL's unmatched capability to transcend time and become a television show not of just one generation, but six and counting. Due to this lengthy success, *Austin City Limits* has become the only television show to have been awarded the National Medal of the Arts. ACL has also been deemed by *Time* magazine as one of the ten most influential music programs of all time and has been enshrined as a Rock & Roll Landmark at the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame and Museum. Now with its own music festival and Hall of Fame, *Austin City Limits* continues to grow, showcasing the outstanding musical and cultural influence of Austin, the current and past generations' sound, and what musical performance programming is truly capable of when it's inclusive and willing to evolve.

KEEP AUSTIN WEIRD

The community of Austin music venues and their stand-off with COVID-19

By Steve McKinley

Sporting more music venues per capita than any other US city, Austin's *official* slogan is *The Live Music Capital of the World*. It is home to the PBS TV concert series *Austin City Limits* and the annual music/film/interactive festival South by Southwest (SXSW.) The Texas capital is one of the fastest-growing large cities, often voted as the No. 1 place to live, with its mix of tradition, culture, and technology. "City of the Violet Crown" and "Silicon Hills" are some of its nicknames. And, going back to slogans, it still has the *unofficial* one of "Keep Austin Weird." As a musician, you can feel its gravitational pull.

Austin is where numerous music legends, past, present, and future, call home (Janis Joplin, Kathy Valentine, Shawn Colvin, to name a few). Many got their start in its legendary (some infamous) clubs, where they were able to reach out and let their juju flow. Here, we will cover some of Austin's music venues with a spotlight on what makes them so unique and what they're doing now.

The long-reigning queen mother is the **Continental Club**. She opened her doors in 1955 as a swanky private supper club, with vintage cars and hot rods ever-present nearby dangling like sacred jewelry. Over time, she spread her musical wings to host country, Americana, swing, rockabilly, rock, and blues. It was voted the 2019 Best Intimate Live Music Venue. In the wake of COVID-19, the **Continental Employee Relief Fund – Online Tip Jar** was initiated, and one hundred percent of the donations benefit its employees who can't work during this public health crisis.

Located on the campus of The University of Texas at Austin is the **Cactus Café.** It opened in 1979 and is located in the Depression-era Union Building, which was constructed with New Deal funds (when you talk about Texas, you're going to get some history). What's uniquely cool about the Cactus Café is that both notable artists and up and coming acts have the chance to perform here. Past performers include Dixie Chicks, Brandi Carlisle, Ani DiFranco, Kristin Hersh, Alison Krauss, Sharon Shannon, and Milla Jovovich. There was a threatened closing in 2009, but as members of the Austin community rose up to form *Friends of the Cactus Café*, an agreement was reached, and it remained open. Like most venues, they temporarily closed due to COVID-19 but engaged the **Cactus Café Operations Fundraiser.** Their concert calendar shows live performances starting in September.

You can't talk about Austin and not hear about ***Austin City Limits*** with its TV series, festival, radio show, and music venue **Live at the Moody Theater** (ACL Live), which opened in 2011. The television show premiered in 1974 and, as it's still running to date, was proclaimed as "the longest-running music show in the history of American television." The show and its original studio were inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 2010. Notable performers included in their 40th-anniversary event were Loretta Lynn, Bonnie Raitt, Rosanne Cash, Marcia Ball, and Shawn Colvin. Shows at ACL Live have been canceled or postponed to later dates.

Over at the blues side of the tracks is **Antone's Nightclub,** which opened in 1975 by the late Clifford Antone. In 2015, it was restored by a new team and serves as Austin's premier home of the blues. On July 15, they will celebrate their 45th anniversary but are asking for help to get there with a Go Fund Me page to support their staff and resident musicians.

With its intimate atmosphere and award-winning listening room, the **Saxon Pub** has been the go-to spot for music and film contenders since it opened in 1990. Being a choice spot for live recordings, video, and filming, they have also featured food trucks and free happy hour shows. They are working on rescheduling shows, actively soliciting their merchandise, and even raffling off their coveted bar tables to help support its staff.

Continual updates on reopening

The venues mentioned in this article are a mere smattering of what Austin has to offer. The extensive list of the city's music venues is long and well earned.

As is the case for almost all music venues, they are currently closed (at this time of writing) or slowly reopening, and previously scheduled performances have been canceled or rescheduled for a later date.

As Texas recently reopened, Governor Greg Abbott announced in early June that bars remain at fifty percent capacity and under strict conditions (e.g., patrons must be seated). Tables must be at least six feet apart. But these guidelines are, of course, subject to change over time.

If they're not crowded, it ain't worth it

While bars are reopening on a limited capacity, most music venues will remain closed. The reasoning is that if they're not crowded, it ain't worth it to open; it's not enough to cover expenses, let alone make money. Regardless, if you've ever been to the Lone Star State, you know the feeling of state pride and their sense of community, showing even on their anti-littering motto, "Don't mess with Texas." One clear thing is that all of the music venues are doing what they can to support their staff.

This is one of those times in your life when you will look back and remember where you were and what you were doing. Soon enough, we will all be able to get out again but, WOW, hanging out binge-watching TV was never so exhausting!

JANIS JOPLIN'S DAYS AT THREADGILL'S

By Caroline Paone

Most every musician has a special time in their career where they transform into their true artistic being. That pivotal moment and the place where it happens usually ends up in the history books and becomes part of music legend. No doubt, Austin has its share of legendary artists with undeniable talent and mystique, such as Stevie Ray Vaughan and his many performances at Antone's and other iconic venues.

Some of Janis Joplin's transformative years took place at the Austin landmark Threadgill's bar. Janis sang at the little joint on the outskirts of Austin once a week with fellow students and old-school bluegrass and country musicians. Kenneth Threadgill, a bootlegger and Jimmie Rodgers fan, converted the former gas station into a beer joint in 1933. Threadgill's blossomed in the 1960s with a wide range of patrons, including the new crop of folkies, beatniks, and hippies on the scene. It was an unlikely venue fostering musical community via a microphone and a mug of beer.

In 1962, Janis attended the University of Texas at Austin, where she studied art, gravitated toward other like-minded students, and was frequently seen carrying her autoharp around town. A pivotal time in her early career, she was just developing her voice already inspired by blues artists Big Mama Thornton, Odetta, Bessie Smith, Leadbelly, and Billie Holiday.

The future rock-blues artist performed on campus and at local "folksings," which were casual musical gatherings (or open-mic nights), where anybody could sing. Threadgill's was the perfect place, happily offering hillbilly blues and beer, and for Janis, she found her own version of home and a chance to push the boundaries of her vocals and society.

Janis and her pals would visit the unassuming bar on Austin's north side once a week. Huddled around a wooden table, they would sing and enjoy a complimentary two rounds of beer for their efforts. As fate would have it, Janis soon became the star attraction at Threadgill's with her unique voice and ultra-special charm.

Eventually, Kenneth Threadgill set up microphones and sound systems to accommodate the performances. During this time, Janis played with the Waller Creek Boys, a musical trio she befriended, and they packed the place every Wednesday night.

Janis comfortably sang her favorite blues numbers, which was not typical of the early '60s female artists of the day like Judy Collins, Peggy Lee, and Joan Baez. She would belt out tunes like "C.C. Rider," "San Francisco Baby Blues," and Bessie Smith's "Black Mountain Blues"—her voice showing early signs of the powerhouse vocalist she would become. After moving to San Francisco and the Summer of Love scene, she fronted Big Brother and the Holding Company, had a historic performance at the Monterey Pop Festival alongside other musical greats, and later formed her Kozmic Blues Band.

Although her time in Austin wasn't that long, it was a stepping-stone that impacted her transformation into one of the most unique and powerful American blues singers in history. Her first recorded song, "What Good Can Drinkin' Do," was put to tape in 1962, with help from one of her University of Texas friends.

She never did forget Threadgill's. In 1970, she went back to Austin in style for Kenneth Threadgill's big birthday celebration and performed for a crowd of eight thousand. She came into town after a long tour and sang a few songs, including "Me and Bobby McGee," and presented her old friend with a gift.

Years later, a larger Threadgill's Restaurant opened in Austin and was a huge success (the original site was also preserved). But as fate would have it, Threadgill's sadly closed its doors for good in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. Undoubtedly, its impact on Austin and American music history will never be forgotten—especially when a rough-around-the-edges young lady sang the blues in her own signature style.

Photo in public domain.

"Janis comfortably sang her favorite blues numbers, which was not typical of the early '60s female artists of the day like Judy Collins, Peggy Lee, and Joan Baez.

FENDER STEVIE RAY VAUGHAN STRATOCASTER® RELIC®

Many artists have been influenced by the electric guitar sounds of Stevie Ray Vaughan, including many in this edition. Credited as being a leader in the '80s and '90s revival of the electric blues, he left an indelible mark on the Austin music scene, blazing his way to the top of the charts with his beloved Strat.

Announced at Summer NAMM 2019, the Stevie Ray Vaughan Signature Stratocaster® Relic® from the Fender Custom Shop is the custom "worn" version of the SRV Artist Signature Series model. It features a relic lacquer finish in Faded 3-Color sunburst and closet classic hardware.

In a press release issued by Fender, the company stated, "Stevie Ray Vaughan's impact on modern music has been profound," said Mike Lewis, VP, Product Development at the Fender Custom Shop. "The new SRV Relic model is an incredibly special piece, and it's not a replica of anything he ever played. Vaughan codesigned it with the Shop before he passed, and it's truly a means of honoring something completely fresh and original. While this Stratocaster has been in the Fender artist signature series since the early `90s, it now is getting new life as an NOS version in the Fender Custom Shop."

NECK
Neck Material: Rift Sawn Maple
Neck Shape: Special SRV Oval "C"
Scale Length: 25.5" (648 mm)
Fingerboard Radius: 12" (305 mm)
Number of Frets: 21
Fret Size: Jumbo
String Nut: Bone
Nut Width: 1.650" (42 mm)
Headstock: Stratocaster
Neck Plate: 4 Bolt
Neck Finish: Gloss Nitrocellulose Lacquer
Fingerboard: Rosewood
Position Inlays: Micarta White Dot

ELECTRONICS
Bridge, Middle, and Neck Pickup: Custom Shop Hand-Wound Texas Special™ Single-Coil Strat®
Controls: Master Volume, Tone 1. (Neck Pickup), Tone 2. (Middle Pickup)
Pickup Switching: 5-Position Blade: Position 1. Bridge Pickup Position 2. Bridge and Middle Pickup Position 3. Middle Pickup Position 4. Middle and Neck Pickup Position 5. Neck Pickup
Pickup Configuration: SSS

Hardware
Bridge: 6-Saddle American Vintage Synchronized Tremolo
Tuning Machines: Vintage-Style
Orientation: Right-Hand
Hardware Finish: Gold
Pickguard: 3-Ply Black
Control Knobs: Vintage White
Switch Tips: Vintage-White

Miscellaneous
Strings: Nickel-Plated Steel (.010-.046 Gauges)
Included Accessories: Deluxe Hardshell Case, Strap, Certificate of Authenticity

INSIDE THE INDUSTRY

Carla DeSantis Black

It really is about the journey

By Tara Low

A lifelong passion for the creative process, connecting people, and creating communities, fuels and inspires **Carla DeSantis Black**. Many of us know her pioneering work with the magazine *ROCKRGRL*. We met her to learn about her current Artist's Way workshops, involvement with an Israeli TV show, and work on a novel.

You founded *ROCKRGRL* Magazine back in 1994 and continued the venture through 2005—the first publication of its kind. You also held several *ROCKRGRL* Music Conferences. How did you get involved in music journalism and fighting for equal opportunity for female musicians?
I studied journalism in college—after failing spectacularly at a bunch of other majors, including theater, communications, and music. This is mostly because I wanted to be in a band and not school. When I finally got into a band, I noticed a stark difference in the way I was treated compared to the guys in my band. I didn't feel that I was ever taken as seriously as a musician as I took myself. A few years later, I was in an all-female band, and it was even more obvious that people didn't think women were "real" musicians. The way women were written about in *Rolling Stone* and the gear magazines was even more offensive to me. I wanted to understand why this was going on.

Do you have a favorite interview or article from *ROCKRGRL* that still sticks with you?
Not really. I always loved speaking to Ani DiFranco because she was so original—the first truly independent artist. And she took a lot of heat at the time for shunning the big label machine. But I learned something from everyone and every interview because people had such different experiences.

During the *ROCKRGRL* era, you were based in Seattle and later in 2010, moved to Austin, and founded MEOW—Musicians for Equal Opportunities for Women. I was fortunate enough to attend the 2013 MEOWCon, where I met Suzi and Patti Quatro, Jennifer Batten, Kathy Valentine, and so many other great artists—which was so exciting for me. Why the move to Seattle, and can you reflect on the inspiration behind MEOW and some of the exciting times?
When I started *ROCKRGRL*, I was actually in the Bay Area and moved to Seattle in 1996. I loved my time in Seattle, but after the conference I did there in 2005, it was obvious that the world was really changing. By 2008, there was a huge economic bust, and I wanted to live somewhere more affordable than Seattle. I knew a few people in Austin, and that seemed like a cool place to be—also a lot less rain!
Another reason for moving to Austin was the conference climate here. Obviously, SXSW is a big one, and I had only been to Austin for that. I didn't know there was a Hill Country (where I live now) or anything about Texas. I was shocked to find out how many kinds of snakes there are! But by the time I got it together enough to do another conference (MEOWCon in 2013), the business had undergone a total transformation, and it was incredibly difficult to find sponsorship and even people to help with the planning. Both the stage manager and the volunteer coordinators left in the final week. But I always love bringing people together who didn't know they had so much in common. I feel like we have such tunnel vision—we don't always see that the punk rockers, the folkies, and the classical players are all fighting the same battles. Together we stand!

Austin has such a great music scene. How does it compare to Seattle?
I think the Austin scene is broader. There are so many clubs and so many different types of music here—and the conference environment fosters that. I think the Seattle scene is more insular. But musicians in both cities have a tough time making a living. Unfortunately, that is only getting more challenging.

You left the music industry for a few years to become a realtor. What inspired you to make such a drastic change?
I am still a realtor. During the last conference—the one you were at—I joked that if that didn't work out, I would go sell houses—which is what I am doing! I love matchmaking people with each other, and matching people with houses gives me the same buzz.
But I am also facilitating Artist's Way workshops online (based on Julia Cameron's book, *The Artist's Way*), and that is great fun and extremely rewarding. I didn't set out for it to be an all-female thing, but it has somehow turned out that way. The course is forty-nine dollars for eight weeks, and we meet every week on Zoom. We go through the book and

the concepts in it as a group. The idea is to work through creative blocks. This system works for musicians, filmmakers, visual artists, dancers, you name it. The Facebook page is facebook.com/creativebycarla.

Were you able to take any skills that you learned through *ROCKRGRL* and MEOW with you into your job change?
I somehow thought people would be mellower, but that is not the case at all! Buying and selling property is a very emotional process. But I love finding creative solutions to the glitches that always seem to crop up.

I know you were in a band when you were younger. Share with us some experiences from your time in an all-female band and playing bass.
That was probably one of the most life-changing experiences for me—and I have been working on a novel based on that time. This was the early and mid-'80s when The Go-Go's were at their peak of success. We were around the same age they were, and inevitably we would be compared to them. It didn't help that we played all of their hits! But people didn't think we were playing our own instruments. At nearly every show, someone would ask if we were lip-synching. I thought it was funny at first, but the persistence of that accusation began to wear on me after a while. *ROCKRGRL* was my way of trying to figure out why people didn't think women could actually play their own instruments. I still think it's weird and shocking that the perception continues to exist that the female musician archetype is either soft, heartbroken waif crying over a boy, or loud banshee, screaming over a boy. Enough already.

> I think the most important thing is to do what is in your heart—not what others think is best for you.

Now you're back to being involved with music a little bit. Could you see yourself doing it full-time again, or would you like to continue being a realtor as well?
I wouldn't say I am back exactly. I couldn't name a single band from the past five years. But I love seeing you run with a simpatico ethos and applaud your success, tenacity, and spirit, Tara!! I am way past wanting to be in a club 'til all hours. I have an early bedtime. Ha!

Also, you now do creative coaching for artists through Creative by Carla. What has it been like to switch from interviewing artists about their creative process to teaching them how to refine and improve it?
One thing that will never change—I love hearing people's stories and seeing them forge relationships with each other. What I loved about the conferences—which was so different from the magazine—was the ability to see how people met and started working together, sharing ideas, and collaborating on projects. So many of us feel isolated with our creativity, and it blossoms when you have support around you.

Not only are you coaching, but you've also been busy working on a YouTube-series interviewing the cast of Netflix's *Unorthodox*. How has that been going?
YES!! Like everyone else, I have been looking for new ways to be useful during the pandemic. I went to Israel a couple of years ago and have become obsessed with Israeli television shows. Shira Haas, who has the lead in *Unorthodox* (on Netflix), was on another show called *Shtisel*. So the day it came out, March 26th, I watched *Unorthodox* and was so impressed by it. Not surprising, it is a story of a woman who leaves a strict religious community where she does not fit in and moves to Berlin, not knowing a soul.
Not having anyone to talk about the show with, I started a Facebook page for it called Unorthodox on Netflix Discussion. Now there are nearly 6,000 people from all over the world in the group, and I have learned so much and met so many interesting people. So I decided I may as well do an interview show too—I still do love interviewing people! It is on YouTube. So far, I have interviewed several people from the cast and crew, including one of the writers, the costume designer, the music supervisor, and a few cast members. I even spoke with Abby Stein—a transgender woman and author of the book *Becoming Eve*. She used to be a Hasidic rabbi and is an extra on the show. I am still trying to learn my way around iMovie, but it is great, great fun, and so rewarding. I know the lockdown has been so difficult for people, but this is truly the most creative I have felt in years!

Are there any notable differences in interviewing actors versus musicians?
I think the people involved with *Unorthodox* have been surprised by its success, so it is really delightful chatting with them. Everyone I have spoken to has been so appreciative. That is not always the case with musicians, unfortunately. It used to be, though.

You've seen and experienced a great deal in the music industry throughout your career. Do you feel that things have improved for women involved in music over the last several years?
I hope they have, but I don't know for sure. One thing I think is encouraging is that through social media and maybe as a result of #MeToo—the Harvey Weinstein, R Kelly effect—that women are speaking out more about the things they used to sweep under the rug. That can only be a good thing—exposing the darkness to the light uplifts us all.

Lastly, what's the one piece of advice you would offer to young women seeking a career in the music industry, either as a musician, producer, sound engineer, business leader, or in any other capacity?
It really is about the journey. And life has so many more twists and turns than you could ever imagine. We are all just trying to figure it out as we go along, and there are no mistakes. I think the most important thing is to do what is in your heart—not what others think is best for you. Only you know what is best for you, and as women, we are born with intuition. I think when we don't listen to that inner voice is when we get into trouble. Just keep on keepin' on!!

Photo provided by Carla DeSantis Black with permission to use.

DURHAM ELECTRONICS
AUSTIN TEXAS USA

South Austin is home to high-quality tone with **Durham Electronics and Amplification**. **Alan Durham** and **South Austin Music** have teamed up to provide vintage-inspired amplifiers and effects pedals. Completely hand-wired and built, the utmost care and attention go into the choice of parts and construction. Durham's clientele includes numerous guitar-heavy hitters who rely on Alan for their tube amp, pedal, and service needs.

INSIDE THE INDUSTRY

TALKING SHOP WITH MANDY ROWDEN,

FOUNDER OF GIRL GUITAR AUSTIN

By Enmaria Cuminsky

Photo by Mark Maryanovich Photography

Austin, TX-based singer-songwriter, multi-instrumentalist, teacher, and founder of Girl Guitar Austin, a comprehensive rock and roll school for women, draws influences from a wide range of musicians and genres. From rockers like Tom Petty, Neil Young, and The Rolling Stones to singer-songwriters like Lisa Loeb, Lucinda Williams, and Neil Young to the classical music of Vivaldi and Chopin.

Her love of teaching doesn't stop at Girl Guitar Austin; she is also the camp musician for Lucky Star Art Camp, a regular guest clinician for Own Your Own Universe, and a songwriter for Songs for the Soul which she says, "All things I genuinely love and am deeply proud to be part of!"

Besides her countless hours devoted to teaching guitar, she is also a songwriter and touring artist playing her original music. She has released three albums to date and is currently working on her fourth. Rowden chatted with us about Girl Guitar Austin, teaching, her musical background, her Gibson guitars, and more.

As the founder of the music school, Girl Guitar Austin, which we love, by the way, tell us about starting the music school, and why the primary focus on females?
Girl Guitar is one of the things I'm most proud of in the world! It's a comprehensive guitar school and rock camp that focuses on women twenty-one and up in the Austin area. I'm really passionate about the learning side of things, but I'm equally proud of the community that's been built there. I started it, almost by accident, thirteen years ago, after having moved back to Austin from New York City during the holidays and being broke enough that my cell phone got cut off. I thought that throwing together a six-week guitar class would help me get back on my feet, and when someone suggested making it just for women, I ran with it. It turns out we had so much fun nobody wanted to quit after the class was over, so we kept going—and going and going. We've never been "man-haters" or anything overtly political; it just turns out that playing music with women is really, really fun, and it makes for a different vibe—one that lots of people respond really well to. It's an amazing group of people and one I'm very proud to be part of. During the COVID-19 pandemic, all classes and workshops have been switched to Zoom, and we now have participants from all over the US!

How is teaching music to others different from making your own? Have you found that teaching has changed your perspective on the music-making process?
Teaching has definitely changed how I approach my own music! For one thing, I learn so much from the daily reinforcing of fundamentals that I do with my students, but also, I get constantly inspired by them! Lots of song ideas and melodies come from conversations with my students. I often work on something I've asked them to do just out of solidarity, and it's always pushing me forward.

When the pandemic hit and stay-at-home orders were issued, you had to change your structure to meet the demands of your students. How did you approach the new format, and do you see this as a new way of reaching more students?
In some ways, the pandemic has done me a huge favor! I'd never even heard of Zoom before March of this year, and now it's the platform I use to teach all my classes, workshops, and private lessons. I currently have students in 11 different states (and one in Spain) and more coming in all the time, so I will definitely be making adjustments as we all start getting back together in person to keep my out-of-towners plugged in and rocking out. There's a good chance I wouldn't have thought of this on my own, and it's been a really cool experience to share Girl Guitar's classes with women from all over!

You also participate in workshops with Terri Hendrix of Own Your Own Universe. How is that experience?
I've been teaching guitar workshops at Own Your Own Universe for a few years now and really love working with Terri. It's a great space, a great group of people, and a natural fit for my skills and my laid-back approach to teaching. I've looked up to Terri for a long time, so getting to work closely with her has been a lot of fun.

Share with us a little of your musical background; when you first began playing a musical instrument, what shaped your style of music, what music you grew up listening to.
I grew up playing classical piano and violin from age six and was in a pretty uptight religious environment where I was totally closed off from anything mainstream; it was all either classical or gospel. My little world took a serious pivot when I was about thirteen, and my older brother brought home a copy of Tom Petty's *Greatest Hits*—it was like the whole world opened up to me. I knew somehow I wanted to play music—loud, fun, empowering music that made me happy. I didn't abandon classical music completely, and gospel still works its way into my writing fairly regularly, but loud guitars and topics that were relevant to me took my focus after that. In high school, my friend and I decided somehow or other that we were going to join Weezer, or at least marry into it, and guitars seemed like the obvious path to making that a reality. I found a clunker and got started, and that's been a big focus of everything after that. I'm still waiting to hear from Weezer, but I figure it's not over yet.

From what I've read, you're a multi-instrumentalist with a soft spot for folk instruments that are featured in your music. Besides guitar, what instruments do you play? Do you have a favorite?
Guitar is my favorite by far these days, but I still have a soft spot for violin/fiddle and piano, and they're a close second and third. I play a good amount of drums and bass as well as harmonica and mandolin and dabble a bit with lap steel, banjo, and ukulele.

I know you play Gibson guitars, and as a Gibson artist, what is it about their guitars that make them your go-to?
When it came time to invest in a really good guitar, several years after high school, all I could find myself drawn to were '60s era Gibsons, and I ended up with a 1967 J-45. Years later, I've owned many, many, many Gibson guitars and still love them as much as ever. It's

the sound, it's the aesthetic, it's how they feel in my hands; they just do it for me, and I've had a lot of fun learning the brand, the history, and the instruments.

What are some of the models you play?
My go-to's are a pretty recent J-200 and J-45, but I also own a 1980 Les Paul Custom, a 1964 F-25, a 1936 L-00, a '60s 12-string, a 1937 Lap Steel, a '60s Mandolin, and I often teach with one of their new G-45s. There are others that get traded in and out from time to time, but the above are my steadies, and they bring me tons of fun and happiness!

You've gotten to work with GRAMMY award-winning producer Lloyd Maines in the past, and Don Richmond produced your most recent album. Are there any other producers you'd like to work with in the future?
I'm working on a new record as we speak that Matt Smith is producing at 6 String Ranch in Austin, and needless to say, I'm quite excited for it! Beyond that, I haven't picked out a bucket list of producers, but this makes me think I should! I'll admit to fantasizing about working with Benmont Tench or Mike Campbell of The Heartbreakers or T Bone Burnett, but that's down the road.
Working with Don Richmond at Howlin' Dog Records was a really wonderful experience, and I'd make more music with him any time. Lloyd Maines played pedal steel on my first record (*These Bad Habits*, 2015), but that was an album I coproduced with Joe Carroll at Treehouse Productions in South Austin. I've been really lucky that every one of these guys have been a dream to work with. Here's to hoping my streak continues!

What about collaborations with other instrumentalists and vocalists?
I love collaborating and hope to do tons more of it after this record. Again, I haven't made a bucket list of people I want to work with, but maybe I will now!

> Austin has a way of bringing people together, and it's pretty special for most of us that have been through it.

You have a very unique musical sound grounded in Americana music. What drew you to this style of music, and who were some of your musical influences?
When I was in college in San Marcos, Texas, I stumbled onto two radio stations that changed my life: Austin's KGSR and KNBT out of New Braunfels. This was the first time I'd heard Lucinda Williams, Kelly Willis, Neil Young, and Willie Nelson. I loved the realness of the production with the earnestness of the songwriting, and that it came from what seemed like "real people" rather than pop icon types. That kind of accessibility made their music really appealing to me, and I've been in love with it ever since.

Do you think your sound has changed a good deal since you started making music? If so, what caused it? If not, what has helped you maintain your sound?
Well, I certainly hope my sound and my skills have matured, but I still love the same stuff. I'm a lot more knowledgeable now, so I know the music I've studied in the intervening years has influenced me. I'm also a lot less judgmental of my work, and I like what I'm writing now better than I did back then. I play a lot more electric guitar now than I did in those early days, and that plays a part in my sound. It's a louder show now, and I like it that way!

From my perspective, I feel there's a close-knit music community in Austin—it seems that almost everyone I interview in Austin is connected somehow. Share with us your view of the Austin music scene.
Oh man, I could rattle about the Austin music scene for a long time; I've been here for fifteen years and have been playing gigs here for even a little bit longer. It's been a really special experience, and I've loved getting to know and getting to play with so many wonderful people here. As Austin has grown, a lot of the scene has spread out to rural areas (or just up and left Texas altogether), and it's been sad to see lots of folks move on; however, there's still a bond, a familiarity, when I run into folks out on the road or on social media. Austin has a way of bringing people together, and it's pretty special for most of us that have been through it.

Arlyn Studios is a 7,000 square foot world-class recording studio located in Austin's downtown area. Opened in 1984 and named after owner **Freddy Fletcher**'s father, it occupies space in Austin's Opera House. The studio houses a broad range of gear, including proprietary recording equipment, to offer artists classic to cutting edge capabilities.

Arlyn is run by **Lisa Fletcher, Will Bridges, Jacob Sciba, Joseph Holguin,** and **Whitney Gonzalez.** They recently received the award for Best Recording Studio at Austin Music Awards. Notable female artists who've recorded at Arlyn include Bonnie Raitt, Bonnie Bramlett, Carrie Rodriguez, Carson McHone, Edie Brickell, Emily Wolfe, Indigo Girls, Jennifer Nettles, Lorde, Lucinda Williams, Margo Price, Rosie Flores, and Shawn Colvin.

SPIRITUAL SISTERS

LZZY HALE AND PATTI QUATRO TALK SHOP

By Carla DeSantis Black

At first glance, you may not think LZZY Hale, front person, guitarist, and cofounder of the hard rock group Halestorm has much in common with Patti Quatro, who, in the '60s and '70s, was one of only a handful of female guitarists, in The Pleasure Seekers, Cradle, and Fanny. But you would be dead wrong. Similarities abound.

Each is a virtuoso guitarist in her own right. LZZY and Patti have both played in bands with their siblings—LZZY with her younger brother Arejay and Patti with brother Mickey and sisters Suzi (the iconic bassist), Nancy, and Arlene.

LZZY grew up in rural Pennsylvania and makes her home in Nashville, while Patti hails from Detroit and now lives in Austin, TX.

We thought it would be fun, interesting, and educational to get these two together to compare, contrast, and talk shop. What follows is an in-depth look at their perspectives on playing and how the music industry has changed—or not—in the past sixty-odd years.

Patti Quatro playing with Fanny

Photo provided by artist with permission to use

What is your earliest memory of music, the first thing you remember being influenced by?

LZZY: My dad was a bass player, so my earliest memories are of watching his gigs. I was probably about nine at the time. I got very much into his type of music through that.

Patti: I grew up in a very, very musical family. My dad was a big band leader, and he infused us with music. We used to make fun of his music, but we still had fun with it. My brother Mickey was a national TV star on the Lawrence Welk show when he was thirteen. Rock was coming in so heavily that it was like an explosion with the English Invasion, acid rock, Southern rock, and Motown all at once. There was a lot of family involvement, and our parents were so supportive of us.

LZZY, were you in a small town or were you near Philly or any of the other big cities?

LZZY: I spent most of my young adult life in Bethel, Pennsylvania, smack dab in between Lancaster, Lebanon, and Harrisburg. At that point, there were more cows than people. We grew up on a twenty-acre farm and sold sheep to buy our first s**tty PA system. Our first trailer to carry equipment was a donkey trailer.

How did you both end up in a band with your siblings?

LZZY: My parents bought a drum kit for me. I don't know how old I was, but I didn't touch it. My brother and I had an adjoining closet growing up, so his room and my room were separate, but we shared the same closet. He snuck into my room and destroyed my kit when I was gone. So finally I said, 'Take it. Just stay out of my room.' I had been taking piano lessons since I was five, so I was starting to piece things together. It clicked that I could take chord progressions and write my own melodies to them. I started showing my little brother these things. He has always been incredibly talented at the drums, always been able to keep a beat. When I was thirteen and Arejay was ten, we entered a talent show at the Schuylkill County Fair in Pennsylvania. It was this weird, outdoor auditorium. We're on the way to the gig and little bro, as annoying little brothers are, turns to me and says, 'We can't just go up there as

LZZY and Arejay Hale.' I said, 'Fine. What do you want to call it?' We went back and forth, and eventually, he said, 'What about Halestorm?' I said, 'That will work for today.' From that day forward, we played anywhere: bowling alleys for pizza, Friendly's Restaurant for free ice cream, and youth "lock-in" church functions—wherever they'd let us play.

Patti: My dad gave us lessons in everything. We had vocal lessons; we had piano. I was schooled in piano like LZZY was. And then I turned to guitar. Our little epiphany was when Suzi was playing bongos with my dad's band when she was six years old or something, and I was on guitar. I went to a Beatles concert later and saw everybody around me screaming and crying. And it just hit me completely differently. I thought, 'I want to do that!'

We decided to bring in the younger sisters. That's how we got our people filled out in the band. We asked Suzi and Mary Lou [Ball, guitarist]. Suzi wanted to play drums, and I told her, no, no. My dad had a bass in the basement, and I said, 'You're gonna play bass.' Another sister was already taking drum lessons.

Like LZZY, we played everywhere we could. Our first gig was at a teen club, where we dared the club owner to put us on stage. We'd only been together for two weeks! I said, 'We can play better than your guys', who were already playing there—Glenn Frey and Bob Seger. So we learned three songs, and he put us up there. All the girls were at the front, all the boys in front of them. The girls were laughing and said, 'Oh, this should be really good.' By the end of it, they just shut up. They were surprised, and he kept booking us after that. A record guy came in two weeks later and wanted to sign us.

LZZY: That's amazing.

Patti: It just started taking off. But it was a joke. In those days, you were buttoned up and pigeonholed as a woman. You didn't rock a guitar. You just didn't do it.

LZZY, do you feel like that has changed?

LZZY: It has immensely because of people like Patti, Suzi, and their peers beating down the brush in this dense jungle of a business. It's still a very sexist world.

Patti: It is.

LZZY: I don't feel like I need to go through the things that you guys had to go through. But that's because you went through it. And I don't know if I can thank all of you enough.

Patti: They wanted every girl band in that era to be tits and ass. They figured we were going to fall in love and get pregnant, so they did not want to sign a bunch of girls.

LZZY: Even coming up in my scene, there are three very, very small categories. If you were in clubs, you would find yourself in situations where you would think he was just saying something because I'm a girl. Or you'd carry in your equipment, and without fail, some guy would say, 'My girlfriend never does that for me.' I'm the girlfriend carrying in HIS equipment, and where is he? Then you get to another level, where you're talking to labels, and they say, 'We love what you do, and we think you're talented, but we don't know what to do with you because the girl thing just isn't a thing.' The next day trying to get your s**t on radio, they're saying, 'Well, we already have that token girl in our repertoire, so we don't need another one.' Those things still happen, but I never found myself having to sit in somebody's lap to get my record played on the radio. You girls, Patti, were roughing it. You were the front line in a war that we're still in.

Patti: I didn't sit on anybody's lap.

LZZY: In the most amazing way possible, people take me seriously now only because of everybody who has come before me. Obviously, there's a lot of effort on my part to be legitimate—I'm not downplaying the fact that I've worked very hard to be here—but part of it is really what happened before. Patti, you and I have talked about this before, but how powerful it is when a young girl sees another girl, another woman, who is successful in the same thing that you want to be successful in. Then the reach becomes a little bit less impossible.

I think it's a thing because there are still so few women out there. So it is definitely better, but it could be a lot better, right?

LZZY: Absolutely. The fact that we're still fighting for that and having that conversation shouldn't be a thing in 2020 at this trajectory, but it is.

Patti: I'm gonna be blasphemous to the girl groups right now. I'm just honest about it. When we were playing in my two beginning bands, we played really heavy, just like the guys did. And a lot of the bands we're talking about right now, they were much more pop-oriented. That is why it's so important to see Nita Strauss and LZZY and Amy Lee really kicking it. I am a soft metal, metal, hard rock gal. Half the reason we broke up was because we all had different opinions. Suzi wanted more pop. I was really into the heavy stuff like Zeppelin. And, LZZY, when I see you doing that stuff and going for it, that's what turns me on about women today. It's come a long way.

LZZY: I agree. There's this common misconception that heavy music is directly related to men, and it's really not. If anything, if there's anyone in this species that has reason to rage, it's women.

Patti: No, kidding!

LZZY: We invented this s**t, okay? I did a couple of tours with In This Moment and New Year's Day. They are both even heavier than what we are. I'm hard rock, but soft metal. I interpret metal as Black Sabbath. I appreciate and absorb a lot of metal, but I'm not gonna just sing about death all the time.

Patti: You know exactly what I'm talking about, LZZY. I couldn't have played the stuff that my sister got famous from. I would have died. I'm really proud of her success and her huge career, but it's not my thing. We're all allowed to have our own taste.

LZZY, do you feel right now that you have mentors that you can talk music with and have conversations with on a day to day basis?

LZZY: Absolutely. I've met a lot of my idols and a lot of people that have come before me, and honestly, right now, if I can be completely honest,

Cool, we've won a GRAMMY, toured the world, and played some legendary places. We've met our idols. All these things are monumental moments.

Lzzy Hale

Photo by Jeremy Ryan

what Patti just said is very validating. The past ten years that we've been signed, I've had to fight every step of the way to not be the hard version of Kelly Clarkson, to not be the next Pink. Not that I have anything against those artists, it's just they were never me. Just because you can dress, mimic, or sing as powerfully as somebody doesn't mean that's what's in your soul. If that were my career, if I had put out a pop princess *American Idol* record, maybe it would have been successful, but I would have hated myself and everything in me for doing that because it's not a choice, man. This hard rock thing chose Patti and me, and we had no choice but to just go for it until we keel over. I'm in it for the long haul.
Patti: I played classic rock with my brother's band for two years, and it was amazing. I appreciate every genre, but it's the thing that gets your soul, you know? I can listen to music that's great and poppy, but it's not where I live.

It's interesting that Patti has ended up in bands that were not necessarily her tastes. Fanny was not a heavy band by any means.
Patti: I had to bring the heavy to them and change my attitude.

Tell me about your favorite guitars and your favorite amps. And LZZY, are you asked about that more often than I suspect Patti was back in the day? Do people ask you guitar and amp questions, or not so much?
LZZY: They do. They are respectful enough to do so. Mostly they ask, 'Why do you write about sex in your lyrics?' and 'Does your brother care about that?' I chased after Gibson. I was holding out and waiting for that date for the prom. I had been approached by a couple of companies before I ever got sponsored, but I've always been a Gibson girl at heart. Then I went after Marshall. Technically, the first guitar that I ever bought was a BC Rich Mockingbird. But then I saved up for almost two years to get this very used, broken, '91 Les Paul Custom Tobacco Burst. I broke the neck on it twice over the years, and somehow it sounds better than before.
Patti: Of course!
LZZY: So I've been really into that, and I still use a Marshall JCM 800 onstage. I've obviously ventured out. I use so many different things in the studio, but that's the go-to for me.
Do they use you in ads?
LZZY: They do, and that's always a surprise. You still always feel a little bit of this imposter syndrome when that s**t happens, when you see yourself in an ad. You think, 'Do I deserve to be here, or do they just do that 'cuz I'm a girl? Am I still a novelty?'
Patti: It's all in there, but that shouldn't affect you. You are who you are, and you worked your ass off to get there, so you need to kick that to the floor. I use Marshalls too, but I have a 1953 Les Paul Gold Top.
LZZY: What?
Patti: I have had Pete Townshend and Leslie West try to buy it—everybody's tried to buy it from me and I ain't sellin' it! 1953! And Leslie gave me a custom guitar. I also have my SG Gibson. That thin neck—it's just a fast neck. I was always pretty showy. I'm like you, LZZY. I was all over the stage and throwing my guitar in the air. The SG was so lightweight that it was easy to do all that.
LZZY: Honestly, that's why I like the Explorer, too, because it's the best of both worlds. I have a couple of signature custom Explorers that I've been using over the years, and it's that happy medium between the SG and Les Paul.
Patti: Oh, yeah. It's what feels good on your body and on stage. The Les Paul was just for the studio because it's heavy. So I prefer that in the studio.

What kind of advice are you asked most often?
Patti: I was in a store, and this girl came up to me. I guess she knew who I was. She said, 'I'm a musician, and I'm ready to quit because I'm getting so much flak about being a woman.' She's been persevering, right? Couldn't get anywhere. I sat her down, and we spoke for about a half-hour. I told her, 'Don't you dare let other people affect your life path.' She wrote to me three years later and said, 'You changed my life that day.' I've played Vietnam, hospitals, concerts, everything, but nothing impressed me more than that girl telling me that I had helped her to be stronger along her career path.
LZZY: That's amazing, Patti! We were on a five-day cruise called ShipRocked, and I had a very similar thing happen. This thirteen-year-old girl was already playing in a band, just starting to figure out this whole situation, where people love you, hate you, don't believe in you, etc. My advice, which I still say to myself, was to pay no nevermind to people who love you or hate you. You can love me and think I'm great. That's cool. You can hate me and think I'm the worst. That's fine too. All that matters is what you think of you, and what I think of me. That's been in force since I was a teenager.

I can't imagine having to do this now in an era of social media, where everybody has something to say. Back in my day, we didn't have to deal with that. Now, of course, everybody has an opinion and …
Patti: Including us!
LZZY: Exactly! And most of them are anonymous, which sucks because most of those people would never say that to your face. When I cut my hair short, I got death threats because I cut my hair.
Patti: Oh, my God! I love your hair short!
LZZY: I appreciate that. But it's a reality of the world. I thank God there wasn't Twitter or Instagram when I was a teenager, because I would have gotten in so much trouble. I can't even imagine being a young girl today and going by what a list of anonymous people say about your picture. Let's say you have a picture of the best day in your life. You're hanging out with your best friend by the pool. Maybe you're in a bikini, have your makeup on, and think you look cool. And now, all of a sudden, your life is ruined because fifty percent of the people online don't like you, because they don't think you look cool. That's just stupid.
Patti: Thank you! It's all ego. Everybody has their own opinion. Be true to yourself.
LZZY: Exactly. As long as you're good with you, and you can sit in a room, look in a mirror and be like, 'You know what? You got this.' As girls, we've got to stop worrying about our squish, whether or not we're thin enough. We've got to stop worrying about whether or not a blemish on our face is gonna ruin our life. We've gotta stop worrying about those petty things, because that's something that's been programmed in our heads since we were kids, from the media and old white men who can't handle their own egos.
Patti: I have a daughter who is bringing up her two kids, and all she teaches them is the exact opposite. They want to dress crazy to go to school? Do whatever you want to do. Be kind. I'm so proud of the values she's giving her kids.
LZZY: That's amazing!

So I have one last question for you both.
LZZY: Really? Because we can talk all night!

What has been your proudest musical moment so far?
Patti: Mine was in the '60s. I was on a tour overseas, and we were playing at a gig for people who had been brought over from Vietnam. They were not even cleaned up yet: full of shrapnel, missing limbs. It was horrible. They had us go in acoustically into the hospital. They're waiting to be operated on, and we had to go through to the beds and play for people. This one guy, full of shrapnel, he was missing arms, all bloody—he couldn't even see us. He asked, 'Can you play "Try a Little Tenderness" for me?' We could barely make it through, but we did it. That was most momentous, to know we could give him a moment to forget his problems in his moment of deep pain. That showed me, it's the music. It lifts people up.
LZZY: Oh, that's so beautiful, Patti. For me, it's been my brother and my best friend since I was nineteen and also my significant other. We still like each other and haven't killed each other yet. I consider it mile markers along this big highway. Cool, we've won a GRAMMY, toured the world, and played some legendary places. We've met our idols. All these things are monumental moments. But really, it's the journey, the fact that I'm still relevant at the moment. I say, at the moment, because it could all go away tomorrow. The fact that I'm still doing it with my best friends, and we're still chasing after the same stuff that we got excited about when we were teenagers, that's our biggest accomplishment.

Patti Quatro and Lzzy Hale at HEB VIP

Photo provided by artist with permission to use

TONE TALK WITH ***SEELA***

My name is **Seela Misra**, and I'm a singer/songwriter/backup singer in Austin, TX. I grew up in the Northeast listening to '70s rock and roll and was one of those kids that was always making mix tapes for friends. The Police was the first band I became fanatical about. I got big into Jazz in the '90s and got to tour Japan with my jazz band TOrcH. I've been writing and recording my own material for a while now. My sixth studio album of original material comes out on July 24. It's called *Cool*, and it's the first one I self-produced.

Living in Austin, I'm blessed to get to play with some heavy-hitters who push me and make me sound good. This town is lousy with great players, and I love it. I'm slow to pick up on new music. I'm very picky and like to listen to the same album over and over again. Right now, I'm obsessed with Madison Cunningham while simultaneously revisiting the entire Steely Dan catalog. I'm also a big fan of Spoon, Dirty Projectors, Mavis Staples, and David Bowie. I think my material reflects all these influences with a heavy helping of Central Texas in there too.

What is your definition of tone, and how has it changed over the years?
Tone is everything. It's the first thing that grabs me when listening to music—or just sounds in general. My tone comes from a combination of being a self-taught player who has "odd" chord voicings at times and the fact that I like guitars with a focused sound excellent for rhythm playing. I'm not a big gear head mostly due to a lack of funds and space, but I have a few more guitars than I need, and they are all beloved. I used to go for a big, low sound when I played solo, but having a band makes me want to occupy the middle of the EQ spectrum.

Which guitars, amps, and pedals are you currently using and why?
I'm an acoustic guitarist, and I love my Little Martin that I won at a raffle at Folk Alliance a few years ago. We used it while recording *Cool* quite a bit. We recorded live and miced the guitar using only a bit of compression and EQ afterward. I also have a Blue Ridge that I love and play live more than the Martin. It has a bigger sound through a PA. I have a vintage Fender Musicmaster at home that I mess around with. I love my tiny Vox amp and the Dispatch Master pedal from EarthQuaker. I'm guessing I'll be lugging those to gigs once gigs start happening again.

What about strings?
D'Addario Phosphor Bronze are my go-to.

Are there certain recording techniques you prefer in the studio?
I record guitar and vocals at the same time. I love recording all the basics (me, drums, bass, electric guitar) at the same time, live. From the iso booth, I can see everyone just enough to share the space musically, but not enough to distract me from what I'm doing in my own little world. I get much better results with both vocals and guitar if I do them simultaneously.

How do you keep your sound consistent onstage?
Luckily, Austin is also blessed with some great venue-employed sound engineers, and I get to work with two of the best on the regular: TJ Feronti and Curt Ganem. It's practically a "set it and forget it" situation with these two, and they are super-fast at getting us ready to go. I do my best not to touch the knobs on my pre-amp as well—that helps!

What does your practice consist of?
My band gets together every other week (we play monthly) and runs through most of the setlist. We'll do drills on any sticking points and discuss arrangement changes and flow from one song to the next. Sometimes there's an extra or separate rehearsal for the backup singers, especially if I'm introducing new material or reviving really old stuff. Rehearsals are pretty efficient and on task, but we enjoy a home-cooked meal together, and it's all smiles and lovey-dovey. I'm lucky to play with some really sweet people who also happen to kick ass.

What is your advice for young women who hope to work in the music industry?
Meet everyone. Play with people who are better than you. Ask a lot of questions. Listen to lots of records, especially old ones. Don't fear change. Follow your gut. If you're not having fun, change what needs to change so that you are. Music is a beautiful gift.

"The hardest working case in showbiz" is the slogan for **Calton Cases**. A funny video on their website dramatizes the agony and distress they put their cases through in their product tests. Still, many swear by the company's ability to protect their guitar, bass, mandolin, banjo, violin, viola, ukulele, and other cases at all costs. Over fifty years ago, **Keith Calton** committed himself to create the most solid and reliable cases anywhere, and in 2012, **Jon Green** took over the reins of the company with **Jeff Poss**.

SARAH DOSSEY

ON HER "GLITTER-SOAKED" STYLE OF MUSIC

By Enmaria Cuminsky

Dossey likes funk, pop, electro, and Andrew Lloyd Webber and says she likes to "make a weird blend of those things," describing it as "glitter-soaked." Growing up listening to Mariah Carey and Madonna, she would create mixtapes to sing along to, over and over. She has recently gotten into funk music, which she says, "I can tell you, I am obsessed."

Sarah Dossey began playing guitar at the age of twelve, and also plays synths, piano, and banjo, and recently began DJing. She plays banjo with the folk/bluegrass band Indian & the Jones. As a solo artist, Dossey's music merges her influences of 1980s synth-pop and new wave on her debut EP, Electric, in 2017, followed by singles, "Heartbeats," "Plastic Diamond," and "Better Run." She will be releasing a new single titled "Someone to Love" on July 3, as well as live streaming every Thursday starting July 2 through September 2. The big finale will be held on September 12.

We caught up with Dossey to learn more about her musical influences and how they impact her unique style of music, being a pop artist in Austin, the community called Pop Union that she created for likeminded musicians, and her music, gear, and more.

You have a very unique, magnetic sound that you describe as "glitter-soaked." What attracted you to this style of music?
Thank you! Like so many others, I've loved pop music since I was a kid. I would sit at my tape machine, listening to 104 KRBE on my little boom box, and hit the record button as fast as I could anytime a Mariah or Madonna song came on. By the end of the day, I would have spent a whole day soaking in music and have a little mixtape for myself; then I would keep it running on my karaoke machine and sing along to every single song, over and over. It's only been recent that I got into funk music, but I can tell you, I am obsessed. I started DJing a little over a year ago, and nothing makes people smile like a boppy bassline over a kick-snare and Nile Rodgers' crisp, choppy guitar. Playing Prince and Nile tracks at parties inspires me to make music that makes people smile and get their shoulders moving.

Your music is so unique and blends some older techniques with some very modern styles. Are you bridging the gap between these genres, or do you consider your music something completely different?
The soundtrack of every long road trip in my family growing up was either Fleetwood Mac or The Phantom of the Opera Broadway cast performance. I feel lucky to have grown up hearing those records so much. I've been a part of a lot of different musical projects since I was a kid—from classical to bluegrass to country to Christian to basically everything. I want my music to just be me at its core. There are things that are important to me in terms of writing the song and the instruments that are used in the track, but for the most part, I just try to do whatever makes me feel really good to make. I don't think my growing up with Fleetwood and Phantom is lost at all in my music. I love songs—it's always my focus to make sure the song shines even without all the production elements (like Fleetwood Mac's songs always do!)—and I love the drama that production and arrangement choices can add (Phantom is seriously an arpeggiated synth-rock masterpiece—hooks on hooks on hooks—I will go to my grave saying that!).

To go along with your music, your personal style is also somewhat eclectic. Where do you find inspiration for your look?
Hey, thanks! I've always been into fashion. When I didn't have my ear to my little radio, I was rifling through my costume trunk. I am not an only child, but I am the youngest by six years, so I had a lot of time alone. I would spend so much time alone in my room, building a world and a whole storyline for myself. I moved my furniture around all the time, and the outfits I put together literally NEVER matched. I liked it when people would comment on it / judge me for it. Meant, I made an impact!

You're labeled as a pop artist, yet you choose to live in Austin, TX, a city historically known for country and blues music. Did you, and do you still, find it challenging to create and maintain your unique sound in a city that might not be overtly supported by that genre?
I did for a while, for sure. I remember my first couple of years trying to perform with this project were such a challenge. I have been told that I won't get booked again if I don't bring a band with me (at the beginning, it was always me, my synth, and my laptop). I've had all the tracks I was sending from my laptop only sent back to my monitors—and not in the house—which is a pretty big chunk of the music I make live. But I will tell you, things are changing here a lot. I think people are starting to realize that pop music is fun and fills up the bar! It's nice to see folks in town taking themselves a little less seriously when it comes to music. There are so many bands and pop artists and producers here now, and the scene is growing.

You started Pop Union to unite pop artists and producers in Austin. Can you tell me a little more about that and how it's going?
Just a couple years ago, the few pop artists that were playing shows would all come support one another and commiserate about how disrespected we were, how we couldn't' get booked, and how sound guys hated mixing us. So, a couple of us decided to do something about it. Pop Union was born out of a sheer need to connect with others going through the same things in Austin. Pretty quickly, I realized, too, that by starting this community and seeing it grow, we were literally creating the scene for ourselves. In a weird way, we needed a publicist, and being a unified force did it for us. I only started the group on Facebook and Instagram a year ago. So far, we have almost one hundred members on our Facebook group. That may not sound like a lot, but it's full of artists, bands, promoters, musicians, managers, photographers, and producers who all want to see the scene grow. They're engaging with each other, going to each other's shows, and promoting each other's music. It's pretty cool.

> My dream songwriters/producers to work with right now are Jack Antonoff and Theo Katzman. I would die. Actually, I'd cry first, then die.

Aside from being a songwriter, I know you're a multi-instrumentalist. What instruments do you play, and do you have a favorite?
I play guitar (acoustic and electric), synths, piano, and banjo. I don't actually have a favorite right now, but I've played guitar since I was twelve. I've been playing acoustic a lot lately for live streams and other ways, but I haven't really played it this much in years! Although I did start playing electric a couple years ago, and I am in love. In a weird way, it makes me feel like I am super powerful, but also terrible at the same time. I like the challenge of mastering something new.

You've collaborated with Canadian EDM producer Disero. Are there any other producers or artists that you would love to collaborate with?
Oh, yeah! My dream songwriters/producers to work with right now are Jack Antonoff and Theo Katzman. I would die. Actually, I'd cry first, then die.

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TONE TALK WITH ***DOSSEY***

When it comes to guitar, what is your definition of tone, and how has it changed over the years?
Tone to me is akin to rhetoric. Less about the words you're saying, and more about the vibe, how it makes you feel. I used to make music that was super sound-scapey and lush. Now, I make stuff that has a big fat bassline and jangly drums. What I'm doing on guitar is way less about creating verbed out blankets and more about choppy grooves.

Which guitars, amps, and pedals are you currently using and why?
Guitar-wise, I play a custom Moniker Rival Series electric guitar. It's semi-hollow, and because of that and the pickup configuration, it has the ability to sound like a Tele or a Jazzmaster. Pedal-wise, I have a pretty minimal board—a cheap compressor I got off Amazon, into an EM-Drive, and then a Bellwether for verb/delay. I also use a Radial JDX Direct-Drive when I don't play through an amp, which is when I'm with a band. By myself, I'll turn the compression and overdrive down and play through an old banged up Vox that my buddy sold me for one hundred dollars. I also play a Loar acoustic parlor size guitar that I bought at a resale shop for two hundred dollars. I'm a big believer in not spending a bunch of money on an instrument just because people tell you it's "the best." Just buy what sounds good to you.

What about strings?
I usually go with a heavier gauge Elixir. I play hard, and with a thick, triangular pick, so lightweight strings and I do not get along.

Are there certain recording techniques you prefer in the studio?
Take risks! Don't do what everyone says you're supposed to do, just because it's the "right" way. I am a big believer in not being afraid to speak my mind and give a voice to every idea I have because I TRUST the producer or engineer will help me sort through it all. I also produce a lot of my own stuff in Ableton so that I can get a lot of the weird out from the comfort of my own home. (It's been helping me get some really cool vocal stuff out that I otherwise might be too scared to try in front of anyone else!)

How do you keep your sound consistent onstage?
I play to a click, with ears and tracks, and am a pretty big stickler about the band that surrounds me. I believe that my band is full of some of the best players in Austin, but not only that, they thrive even when subject to concrete form. I value simplicity over showboating—play a simple line really well, and you got a hook. "Chicks dig the melody."

What does your practice consist of?
I do not practice enough. My brain likes to do too many things—I can't focus enough on one at a time. This is why I've gotten into production so much; I think. If I get bored with one thing, it's just a click away to work on something else. I will say that the most I've ever grown as a player have been the times that I committed to hitting the grind at least an hour every day.

What is your advice for young women who hope to work in the music industry?
Don't look left and right. Just set your eyes on what you want and go for it. Let someone else's experience or journey be someone else's. Only you know who you are, or what you want, and that may change—which is totally fine. Do what makes you happy—**work hard at it**—and you will succeed. It may or may not look like what you thought it would, but at least it'll be yours, and it'll be right.

All She Ever Wanted:

Go-Go Kathy Valentine Pens A Memoir

By Carla DeSantis Black

On March 6, 2020, I interviewed Kathy Valentine at her home in Austin, TX, to discuss her new memoir, *All I Ever Wanted.* The book release was scheduled for the end of the month. Kathy had also composed a soundtrack to accompany various chapters and played several songs for me. They were amazing and the book, one of the finest memoirs I have read. It is not easy to capture the flavor and feeling of being a girl in a rock band. Kathy, however, succeeded.

As I got up to leave, Kathy checked her phone and announced that SXSW, scheduled to begin the following week, had been officially canceled by the city of Austin. Although this possibility had been rumored for days, we were both surprised to learn this was actually happening.

How could the city shut this huge event down, I wondered. Didn't they realize how devastating such a move would be to the local economy?

In retrospect, this was the first ripple in a COVID-19 shock wave that changed the world, locally and far beyond.

Within a few days, all social activities in Austin and all across Texas had been banned, including Kathy's national book tour. While she has since taken many of these events online, it must still be a bitter pill to swallow, after so much anticipation and work.

The genesis for the memoir was a novel approach: It began online, 140 characters at a time on Twitter. "It started as a joke because Belinda was releasing a memoir, and I thought, 'I'm gonna do one too!'," she recalls. "It showed me that I had a voice that resonated with readers."

But after nine months of tweeting, the band asked her to take it down, which she did. "Maybe I pulled the curtain back in places where I wasn't supposed to," she admits because she was later fired from the group. It took some time for her to reclaim her place in the band, but she says now she is back and everyone seems to be in a good place.

Kathy grew up in the "me decade" of the '70s, the aftermath of the '60s sexual revolution. It was a time when everyone was encouraged to "do their own thing," and that ethos went double for Kathy, whose mom, embraced the trend wholeheartedly.

Photo by Christopher Durst

Without an ounce of sentimentality or self-deprecation, Kathy tackles both the traumatic and joyful moments of her life equally, with a journalist's balanced eye.

"There's always a crack in the wall of bad where the good can start to seep in," she writes. *"You just have to notice it and let it happen."*

You did a great job in the book of not blaming anyone or being overly emotional about your life.
I was very careful to not tell anyone else's story. I wrote about being a bully once when I was in fifth grade. The point is not to be a gaping wound to everybody, but to write the key things that move the story forward.

Was there anything you wish had made it into the book that didn't?
No, but I need to go back through some old drafts. It really

did evolve. I sent the editor the first ten pages, and she wrote back, '"Nobody wants to read four pages about your grandmother dying." But it was this terrible, horrible thing for me at the end of my drinking. It's one of these things I carry around. Then I realized, just because it's meaningful and I remember it and wrote about it beautifully, doesn't mean it belongs in this book. I just wanted to do a good job. I wanted to write something that I was really proud of and knew I did the best I could do.

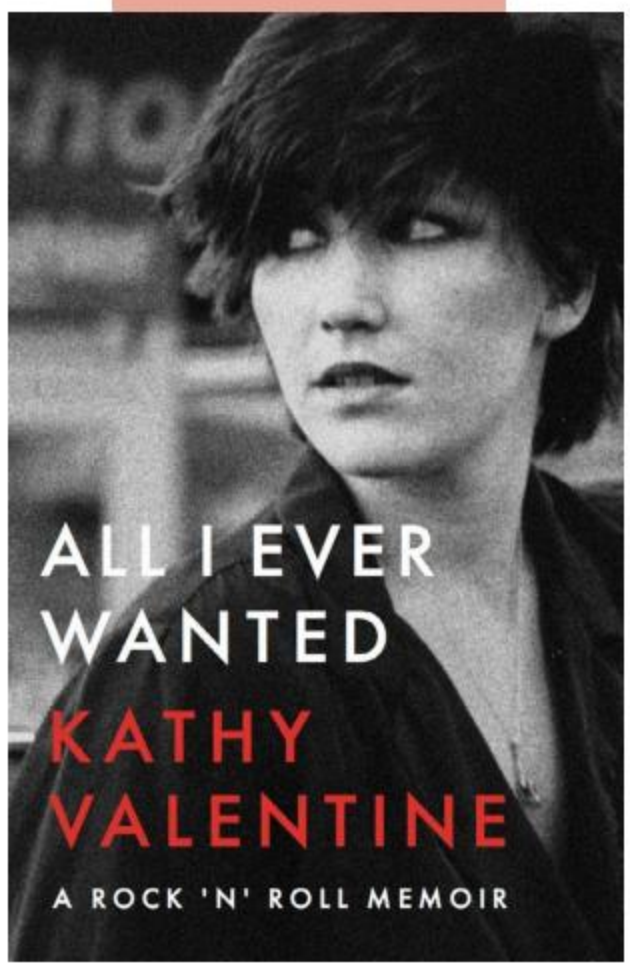
When did you realize you had an unconventional childhood?
That's a good question. Not until I was in the Go-Go's. We shared a lot, and that's when I started talking about stuff. Young people don't realize how different the '70s were. It was on the heels of the '60s sexual revolution. Sex was very freewheeling, and there were no terrible diseases. If you got gonorrhea, you just took something, and it was over. It seemed a little simpler.

So when you think back on your mom, by today's standards, she wasn't doing a lot of mothering. But when you think of her as a child of the '60s, the dynamic is a bit different because she was more of a friend, and you had a lot of shared experiences.
She very much saw herself like that, and as a Bohemian free spirit. She was a psychology major. She saw me as a fully formed individual. My mom's a unique person. She read the book and said she felt terrible. I told her it would have been a boring book if she'd been different. So many people have said it must have been traumatic, but it didn't feel like that.

Has that informed some of your parenting decisions with your daughter, Audrey?
For sure. I try to make sure I'm the parent. I'm a very different mom than how I was parented. As soon as I got divorced, I thought no, no. I don't want it to be just Audrey and me, the way it was just me and my mom. My number one priority was to make sure Audrey felt she still had a family and that her dad was very present in her life. Her dad and I love each other very much, and we're very close. So that in and of itself was so different.

I noticed you also gave him a very sweet shout-out in the book. Is anyone from your dad's family still in your life?
I got to the age where family had more meaning to me. They were colorful characters. I have a lot of fondness for my dad's side of the family.

So much of what you went through were things that happened when you were in your twenties. It is a lot to carry around.
Sometimes I will post an old photo on social media, and some asshole will say, 'oh, you must have been f**ked up.' And I say, 'You know, I was a rock star at age twenty-three in 1982. Show me one person who wasn't high.' In my conventional school years, I was very aware that we were different. And then at Greenbrier (alternative school), I found my people. In the Go-Go's, as we opened up and learned about each other and shared, I realized I was in a band with people that had pretty traditional homes and lives. I was tortured and tormented



at school. But when my mom and I would go to England, I got to see that the world was big. It saved me. And when a family member was going through a hard time, I flew her to LA to help take care of her, the way I was taken care of when I was fourteen years old. A lot of my life in this book was driven by desperation and fear and wanting to keep what I had.

Well, it's dark in a lot of places.
It was also just survival. Once I got in that band, I realized that nobody was going to take care of me, I could take care of myself now. I could make money. I had people around me, I was part of something, I was making a difference, and I mattered. So it was everything I hadn't had, and I was fearful of losing it. I was wrapped up pretty tightly and realized this was how I was going to survive.

You were also thought of as the "real" musician when you joined because you had experience in bands before, like Girlschool.
I always thought I was so experienced, but I realized in writing the book that I'd only been playing for five years.

What was the most challenging part for you to write?
The parts where I have to be honest about my misdeeds. I wanted to do a good job. At that time, I had been a college student for years. I knew how to write, not only from English and creative writing classes, but also from doing research. A lot of times, I would look over what I had written the day before, and it was really good, but it wasn't memoir writing. I put on the music and sat there and would meditate and go back in time. I really tried to remember how it felt because that's what memoir is. It's not a journal or essay. How does it feel now to think about what happened to me then?

You said you had journals to rely on, that you had always kept journals.
A lot was scribbling something down in my Filofax. A lot of it wasn't feelings. Once I honed that skill, I got fairly adept at putting myself in that place. I had a lot of grief over my behavior and realizing that nobody was looking out for me, that I wasn't protected, and it didn't feel safe to feel.

Has everything healed between you and the band?
I think so, and I think the documentary has done a lot towards that. So much of it is about the early days. The narrative is about them coming from the punk scene—before I joined the band. And looking back, I wish I was part of that because the punk scene was affecting me too. I'm glad my book shows that while it was making a difference in their lives and inspired them to start a band, it was making me realize that I didn't have to play like Jimmy Page.

What do you think the Go-Go's legacy is?
Not only were we the first female band to be successful on that scale, having a number one record, but we were one of the first successful indie bands. That's a really major thing, and nobody really talks about it.

And, of course, there hasn't been an all-female band that plays and sings and writes all their own songs that has been as commercially successful as the Go-Go's since 1982. There's that!
There are a lot more women session players and bands that have women in the band. That's an improvement. But why aren't more females starting bands? If you took fifty guy bands, there might be one Radiohead. So if there are fewer bands, there are going to be fewer that are writing hits. I often think the '60s and '70s were such a key time for bands that left an imprint on pop culture, but we didn't really know about the women in that time that were playing.

When you are part of a successful group, it can be challenging to see yourself as an individual as well.
Now I do. Now that I am sober, I know I could never, ever let myself get completely absorbed into an entity again. This is a whole other level. It's one thing to write the book, but then you realize it's going to be out there to complete strangers. They're going to know about these parts of my life. That's a whole other trip. In interviews, I'm used to going in and saying something, and then Jane will say something, and then Gina will say something else. I've never had to carry everything myself.

You've had your own bands too, though.
But I'm always in the background. So this has been an interesting process, and it's a message, and I'm proud to be putting it out to the world at sixty-one. When most people might want to be stepping back a little, I'm putting myself out there. It's exciting, but also frightening.

To hear Kathy Valentine's soundtrack to the book: https://kathyvalentine.bandcamp.com/

TONE TALK WITH *SONYA JEVETTE*

Howdy, Howdy, Friends, Thank you for being here. My name is Sonya Jevette, and I am an artist from Texas—born in Dallas and now living in Austin. I am a single mother and a full-time student taking online classes at ASU. My major is communications, and I have twelve more classes until I finish my degree in 2021. I am a part-time Barista at Starbucks, and I have hosted live music at my store for over two and a half years.

I am a virtual live music artist at SecondLife.com and 3DWEBWorldz.com. I teach guitar lessons via Zoom, Facetime, Skype, and Facebook Instant Messenger.

I eat Paleo style. I love Sushi. I am on the Board of Directors for the non-profit organization, Austin Texas Musicians.

What is your definition of tone, and how has it changed over the years?
My pitch, quality, and strength in my tone are more of the sweet sound. My natural vocal range is key of C. The changes over the years have been more of a comfort in my style. I have learned to trust my style of music.

Which guitars, amps, and pedals are you currently using and why?
I use these tools for the tone—the combination of all of these tools create the sound that I put out into the universe.

Mic: Shure 55SH Dynamic

Guitars: Epiphone Dot ES-335 - Natural Blonde
Ibanez Acoustic-Electric - Blonde

Amp: Peavey 30 amp

Pedals:
SKB PS-45 Pedalboard
Planet Wave Tuner
Livewire ABY Box
BOSS FS-6
Cry Baby Wah
BOSS Blues Driver
BBE Two Timer Analog Delay
Livewire Direct Box
Seymour Duncan pickups for the acoustic guitar

What about strings?
For the Epiphone Dot ES-335 Natural Blonde, I use D'Addario ECG24 ChromeFlat wound. On the Ibanez Acoustic-Electric, I use Elixir Strings Nanoweb 80/20 Med.

Are there certain recording techniques you prefer in the studio?
I prefer to hear the playback after I have performed the song a few times.

How do you keep your sound consistent onstage?
I keep my sound consistent by being able to hear myself. My sound, lighting, and stage presence is half my show.

Photo provided by artist from Firebird Images with permission to use.

What does your practice consist of?
I run scales with my vocals and guitar for about an hour before a set.

What is your advice for young women who hope to work in the music industry?
Be it. Do it. Have it. Find something you enjoy doing in the music industry. Stay focused and take every opportunity towards that goal. Never give up. Benjamin Franklin found 10,000 ways not to make a light bulb. Just because someone else has done it or not done it, find your way of doing.

GRAMMY award-winning producer, director, author, publicist, and music business coach **Tamara Saviano** received the Margaret Moser Award at the 2020 Austin Music Awards. This award is given to a woman in Austin who has had an impact on the Austin music scene, and Saviano was a well-deserved recipient. She is a well-respected key player in Austin's Americana and folk music scene, where she is active in several music industry organizations.

Saviano has worked with legends Guy Clark and Kris Kristofferson, as well as numerous other musicians. She released Clark's biography *Without Getting Killed or Caught: The Life and Music of Guy Clark* in 2016 and will be releasing a documentary on Clark's life soon.

ROSIE FLORES HAS A *SIMPLE CASE OF THE BLUES*

By Enmaria Cuminsky

Rosie Flores' latest release—a blues and R&B album—shows us that going slow can pay off quite handsomely. We talked to the proudly eclectic guitar picker and singer-songwriter about having a day named after her in Austin, her guitar collection, and her explorations in country, punk, jazz, and the blues that started her off on playing guitar.

Tell us about your latest album, *Simple Case of the Blues*.
Two of my producers in Nashville, Kenny Vaughan and Dave Roe, had summoned me to town to make this blues record with them in 2012. I've been friends with and worked with each of them on separate occasions. I found out about this weekly blues night they had going, so I sat in, and it really clicked. That's how the idea to make a blues record with them was born.

The album had been in the works since 2012. Did you find that it was a slow process to put together, or did it come rather quickly past a certain point?
Well, when I worked with Kenny and Dave, the tracking process was super-fast, we cut it in two days! I spent a lot of time in pre-production. The process to get it finished was a very long and drawn out time. I wanted to do the overdubs here in Austin. It just took me a while to find the right producer; it was Charlie Sexton. The right studio, Arlyn Studios, and engineer, Jacob Sciba, and voila, it was mixed! Finally, bit by bit, the money came in to master and get artwork paid for. I was fortunate that a few angels helped me along the way and will forever be grateful for that. I really love this record. Everyone did an amazing job for me.

Did you have any particular role models or influences when putting this album together?
My producers on this record, Kenny Vaughan, Dave Roe, and Charlie Sexton, are role models to me. My vocal influences were Ruth Brown, Etta James, and Bonnie Raitt. On guitar, it was Albert Collins, T Bone Walker, and B.B. King.

You've been involved with different varieties of music over the years, including country, punk rock, and now blues. What inspired the switch each time?
I started a blues band when I was twenty-one because it's the first music I started learning how to play the guitar with. My brother and his friends in high school were blues fanatics, and they both were my guitar mentors. We studied blues records by Howlin' Wolf, B.B. King, and Muddy Waters. I saw Muddy play live, and he made such an impression on me to keep playing the blues. I was around nineteen at the time, and I taught guitar at a local music store for a living. So it's really a circle back to where I started from, to do *Simple Case Of The Blues*. I've actually been playing these bluesy tunes for years with my Austin band, long before the record was finished and put out.
But back up to 1985 to my honky-tonk era. I had a good run in country music when I lived in LA and played the Palomino Club for most of those years. I became a favorite in that LA country scene. The LA punk era happened, and that was a blast. I was living near Hollywood in Studio City—in the right place at the right time. I was unimpressed with where country music was going, with the *Urban Cowboy* movie take-over into the country bars and clubs. The public didn't want to hear Johnny Cash or classic Tammy Wynette, which I was used to covering besides my tunes. The newfound "Urban" country fans wanted songs from the movie only!
So I put my cowboy boots in the closet, grabbed a leather jacket, and started hanging out at The Whisky. I became obsessed with the band X with Billy Zoom on guitar, and Top Jimmy & the Rhythm Pigs with Carlos Guitarlos on guitar. There was a danger element and excitement that was missing in country music. Hence, I joined a female cowpunk band called the Screamin' Sirens as their guitarist and musical director over the next four years. We made a few recordings, and an LP

Photo by Valerie Fremin

called *Fiesta* on Enigma Records. We were featured in a movie called *The Runnin' Kind* (YouTube has a version of it) and toured around the US for a few years.

My itch to go back to singing lead in my own band and do my country/rockabilly/blues stuff had me start opening shows for Jerry Lee Lewis, John Prine, Elvin Bishop, David Lindley and *El Rayo X*, Emmylou Harris, and many others. I made a demo with Howie Epstein from The Heartbreakers at his home studio with a board that Tom Petty gave him. I was able to eventually get my record deal with Warner Reprise Records for the *Rosie Flores* album. They were looking for a female Dwight Yoakam, or so I was told, and I had similar tastes in old country songs like he did. We always talked about trying to bring back this old sound; he did a better job at that than I did. I worked that country scene for about two years, put out a great record, but it didn't happen for me in the big way I'd hope for, so I turned to rebellious rockabilly, where I could mix rhythm and blues and hillbilly.
Back in the '80s, it was different. The stations were more about the Reba sound. Nashville producers had her sounding more pop than classic, but she was the hot ticket for years. I guess for rockin' country with a female picker, I was too ahead of my time. But to this day, I love the classic sound in the '50s, '60s, and '70s with Buck Owens, Wanda Jackson, Tammy Wynette, Johnny Cash, Patsy Cline, Jerry Reed, and Gary Stewart. Those days and that sound on the commercial county radio were, and are, totally gone.
I made some very good records, honing my guitar skills and songwriting, with producers Greg Leisz (steel guitar, etc.) and Dusty Wakeman (bassist). Those HighTone records still sound pretty darn good and continue to get airplay to this day on Sirius Outlaw Country and others. My best-selling HighTone CD is *Rockabilly Filly*, featuring rockabilly queens Wanda Jackson and Janis Martin.

Do you think you'll stick with blues for a while, or do you see yourself returning to another genre in the future?
Well, I'm working on songs for a follow-up blues record right now. I have learned that it's quite hard to change genres with the industry, not knowing what to call you or how to hire your act. It's in my heart and soul to be a guitar player, a singer, and a songwriter, so I just keep doing what I love, and sometimes I go off track and follow my heart because I love great songs, and I need to sing what I want. Why hold back? Rules are made to be broken. For instance, I have a guilty pleasure group, where I spend one night a week singing jazz with the Blue Moon Jazz Quartet. I get to sing the Great American Songbook, and it's a gas to improvise with the melodies and to riff that way, rather than with the guitar. I haven't studied jazz guitar enough to play it in the Quartet, and Jim Stringer is insanely great at it, so it's fun just to be a jazz singer. Since the pandemic, I decided to learn to play piano, so we'll see what that brings on.

You're often referred to as "the Chick with the Pick." Where and when did that nickname originate?
My email address starts with the handle "chickwpick," so I guess it started there.

I would assume that you've gone through many guitars over the years. Do you have a favorite or preference when it comes to buying a new one?
My favorite axe is the SteelTopCaster made by James Trussart. I am starting to look for lighter guitars with good pick-ups, so I'm talking to Trussart about building me a lighter guitar that I can easily carry with me on long road trips. Walking through airports and being on the road with a heavy guitar is not too good on my neck and shoulders these days, although I don't mind standing on stage with a heavier guitar. Trussart's workshop puts out such great guitars; it's almost an addiction—I want more. But I own about thirteen various guitars. My collection is from Gibson to Gretsch and a few acoustics, Martin to Taylor. Thirteen, fourteen guitars, or fifteen if you count my ukulele. Small collection compared to most players I know.

What kinds of music were you exposed to in childhood, and how do you think they've influenced your musical tastes today?
I grew up listening to the popular jazz artists of the time, the crooners of the time before rock 'n' roll like Nat King Cole, Frank Sinatra, Peggy Lee, Ella Fitzgerald, Julie London, and all the others who were making hit records and were on TV. I learned to sing along with all of it, as a kid. A few years later, in '57—with Buddy Holly, Elvis, and Jerry Lee Lewis—rock 'n' roll caught on like fire, and that's all you heard on the radio. So that was a very exciting time as a kid in Texas. The funny thing is, I started recording at age seven on a two-track reel to reel tape recorder that my father brought out and egged us kids on. I learned early on what it was that made me smile. A star is born! Haha!

August 31, 2006 and 2017 were declared Rosie Flores Day in Austin. How does it feel to have a day named in your honor?
I was, of course, honored and delighted. It's an honor bestowed on a few people in Austin who are thanked for contributing to the community in some way. For me, I guess I'd been playing Austin since the Screamin' Sirens' era in the early '80s, and then eventually moving here in 1988. I moved back and forth to Austin between LA and Nashville a few times, but the third time stuck, and I've been here for fourteen years now.

TONE TALK WITH ***ROSIE FLORES***

What is your definition of tone, and how has it changed over the years?
I believe tone is all in the fingers, your individual touch. I've been able to learn what that tone is that makes me happy. It's also a mix of the amp and the pedals, and the room and the sound on stage. I have a bit of arthritis in my hands nowadays, so I'm not as strong as I was where I used to get a gnarlier attack, like in my punk days in the Sirens. So I guess my tone has a journey to go on through the following years.

Which guitars, amps, and pedals are you currently using and why?
I like Fender amps. If I could carry, my favorite is the Super Reverb (blackface '60s), or any old ones are so nice and warm and kick ass. I've had various Fenders from Princeton to Deluxe Reverb and Bassmans, all of which I've enjoyed playing in the studio and live on stage. But in answer to your question, what am I playing now? I've got a Quilter, Micropro mack 2. It's 200 watts, and it's got all kinds of tone settings that I can play with and an effects loop, line out, and mic input. For a versatile amp with great tone and weighs hardly anything (solid-state), it is pretty cool to gig with.

What about strings?
Ernie Ball Strings, who thankfully endorse me. I play a very unusual set: .009, .011, .014, .020, .030, .038.

Are there certain recording techniques you prefer in the studio?
I like recording live. Overdubs for guitar fixes and editing where need be, that's always fun. I try to get where I can see everybody when we're tracking. Overdubs are icing on the cake and so much fun to get my imagination going with collaborating with the engineers and producer. I've coproduced my own records as well as produced other artists from time to time, which I absolutely love. The studio feels like the most amazing playground, I can't get enough of it, and dream of having my own studio one day and bring in my favorite engineers, who I really leave most of the magical techniques up to.

How do you keep your sound consistent onstage?
Well, I probably just keep messing with it from stage to stage and find my favorite tone. I like to experiment, so there no rules to be totally consistent.

What does your practice consist of?
I sit on the couch where I can easily grab my guitar, play along with YouTube, or the TV. It's fun to tear apart solos that I like and try to figure licks out by inspiring pickers. I love the slow down apps or the speed control on YouTube. I never grow tired of learning and practicing—it makes a big difference in how I play.

What is your advice for young women who hope to work in the music industry?
Get out while you can!! No, just kidding! Seriously, I'd advise young women to study your craft and really try and master whatever you're in to. Be a nerd about it. Then do study the business side of it. Learn how to be smart so you can be confident when you ask for what you think you deserve. Have a good sense of humor; this is actually very important. Learn everything you can about social media and music videos, essential these days if you're an artist. It's a man's world out there, and you can get respect when you know what you're doing. It takes time, but, in the end, if you're in this for the long haul, you'll earn more and be happier and fulfilled.

JACKIE Venson

GUITARS, MUSIC, AND INSPIRATION

Jackie Venson is an Austin-born singer-songwriter and guitarist who was the first African American woman to receive the 'Best Guitarist' title at the Austin Music Awards.

Here, we take a closer look into the evolution Venson went through during her career so far, her influences, how she perceives music, and what advice she has for aspiring female musicians who are willing to take their chances in the music industry.

Venson began playing piano at the age of eight. Trained at the prestigious Berklee College of Music in composition, studio production, and piano, she decided to pick up a guitar during her last year. We chatted with Venson at Winter NAMM about her decision to switch to guitar, and she told us, "I played classical piano for the first decade or so of my musical career, and then I decided that I wanted to do something a little freer. The thing with classical piano is that you have to learn other people's music and there's a lot of structure and rules, and I was tired of that. So, I decided to play electric guitar and kind of express myself differently."

Venson is not just an incredible artist, but a versatile performer as well, who leaves nothing to chance when it comes to giving the crowd a fantastic show.

Forbes magazine in 2019 even went as far as claiming that Jackie Venson is on her way to becoming "an Austin legend." As a matter of fact, May 21, 2014, was declared Jackie Venson Day by Austin City Hall.

Venson has been obsessed with music from a very early age. Over the years, she has seen a lot of changes in her style while working through various genres of music. She has been cited as drawing influences from Buddy Guy, Sade, and Alicia Keyes, and had the opportunity to tour with Gary Clark, Jr., Earth, Wind & Fire, and The Doobie Brothers, to name a few. Numerous national and international festivals have added to her extensive performance schedule. When discussing memorable tours, she says, "I would have to say it's between the first European tour, the month I spent in New York City, and headlining Gruene Hall."

Her last album, *Joy*, was released last year, which contains twenty incredible tracks. "One of the songs was recorded at Royal Studios in Memphis, Tennessee, but the rest were recorded in Austin, TX, at either ORB or The Bubble," she says. She goes on to say, "I really loved working on 'Afterglow' and 'Joy' because it was my

Photo by Ismael Quintanilla III

Photo by Ismael Quintanilla III

first experience really buckling down on an arrangement, making decisions based on the rest of the collection of music, and really digging deep within myself for all of my accumulative musical knowledge."

Music that inspired her in her early days

The music in Disney movies was a significant influence in Venson's early life. She is impressed by the precision and brilliance that goes into the writing and production of these musical scores by "some of the most legendary people on Earth."

"Elton John himself wrote some of the music for *The Lion King*, while Hans Zimmer did the score," says Venson. She recalls, "And here I am as a kid, wondering why the music is making me feel a certain way, wondering how the people created the music. These thoughts that early on in my life were huge for me and left a lasting impression on song form, arrangement, and lyrical style."

Music that influences her present style

At the moment, Venson's music is inspired by more than one specific genre. She finds it difficult to just stick to one particular style, and instead, prefers to capitalize on what sounds best to her while leaving out the things she doesn't like.

"I'm just kind of casting a really wide net," says Venson. "Every time I release a new record, I'm kind of honing in on what I liked about the last one and leave out what I didn't like. I try to hone in on the sound right now, and in order to do that, you kind of got to explore a lot of sounds. So that's what I'm doing."

Talking about her Gibson Les Paul Studio named 'Rosetta'

Rosetta is Jackie Venson's Les Paul Studio, which has a beautiful grain finish with gold accents, has a coil tap with two pickups producing distinct sounds upon tuning volume knobs. "It has about ten to eleven tones available," she tells us.

"I tried out a few other different models, and I just didn't think that the tone options were possible for what I need," says Venson. "I was like, I need to be able to do everything, and the people at Gibson suggested to me the latest Les Paul Studio. The Studios, particularly with coil tap pickups, are really awesome," added Venson. "You get a lot of variety in terms of tone, and you can play any genre. You can do whatever you want with that guitar. You can mellow it out and make it a jazz guitar, or you can engage the humbuckers and make it cut through the wall. You can do whatever you want with that guitar."

When it comes to her definition of tone, Venson says, "Tone has always been and will always be in the hands of the beholder. I don't think the brand of the instrument or pickups or anything has a lot to do with it. Whether or not the person is known for certain effects like distortion or fuzz comes into play as well, but even through that, there's a foundational tone that exists only in the hands."

Jackie Venson's advice to the young women looking to get started in the music industry

Jackie Venson is an inspiration to hundreds and thousands of young women who are willing to work in the music industry. "Be yourself, don't chase pipe dreams, do it for the music. There's no road map—there's no right or wrong," says Venson on being asked what she would say to these young women. "Everything is a grey area, and if you don't love music to the very core of your being, you won't last very long. Never get desperate. Be patient."

We had a chance to catch up with Venson recently to talk a little more about her album, Joy, her songwriting process, and what's next.

Last year, you released a twenty-track album titled *Joy*. What does joy look like for you?

Joy, for me, is being myself and expressing myself the way I want to express myself. It comes from within me, and I guard it and only share it in certain ways so that I can protect it. I think of my personal joy as a secret well, that only I know the location of, with a locked cover on it that only I have the key to. This keeps outside forces, haters, or whatever depressing stuff happening in the world away from my personal "supply" of joy.

You must have had to spend quite a bit of time in the studio working on the album. What does your creative process look like when you're songwriting?

I record everything, even when I'm on an airplane or somewhere in public. I will still pull out my phone and record an idea. I have done this for over a decade and have a huge library of demos that I continuously draw from. I usually come up with the music or the beat first, and then after I lay that down, in my sampler or with a looper. I play leads over the music until I find a melody that resonates with me. From there, I work on arranging the song, and I do the arranging with my Pioneer Toraiz SP16 Sampler. Lyrics are the last thing to happen, and once I have the melody and the arrangement, I just listen to the demo over and over until words come out.

Some of the tracks on your album have very different sounds from each other, yet they all go together cohesively. How did you balance making each track different while still telling a continuous story when you were writing?

I believe what makes them all go together is the fact that I wrote all of the songs, so maybe they are different genres, perhaps even some of them are heavy synth and drum machine arrangements versus four-piece rock band arrangements. What's common throughout the record is that I wrote all of the songs, that I am playing the guitar on all of the songs, and that I am singing on all of the songs. What I am trying to get people to understand is that genres don't matter; it is the voice of the artist that matters. The artist IS the genre, especially if they write their own music or at least have a large part in writing their own music.

***Forbes* called you "an Austin legend in the making." Does having something like that said about you add pressure to continue getting bigger?**

No, I let go of all career pressure and don't plan on ever inviting it back in. I am a human; I am an artist. I am going to be alive on this earth for a time period, so everything is just a natural progression for me that directly correlates with the timeline of my actual life. People don't feel pressure to grow up and get old, so I don't feel pressure to make my career grow faster than it organically would anyway. I am here for the journey.

How do you think growing up in Texas has affected your sound?

I play the guitar—Texas and guitars go hand in hand like Idaho and potatoes. Throw a rock in Texas, and you'll hit a guitar player better than most you've ever heard, guaranteed. I think growing up in this state, as well as Austin, is what subliminally made me choose to switch to the electric guitar.

What attracted you to the unique mixture of blues, rock, and soul that you're playing now?

I just write songs and whatever arrangement fits best is the arrangement I go for. I let the song decide the arrangement, and this method has led me to some really great songs that resulted in awesome shows and memories. I think the reason why I am so open to different arrangements is a mixture of the education I got in college and the different music I have listened to and been into throughout my life.

You had a world tour planned for this year, but it was obviously cut short by the pandemic. Are you writing more music? Will you reschedule your tour for next year, or will you wait to tour until you have new music?

My next album is actually supposed to come out this year in September, so it will have to be after that. I think next year I will be back to touring—we just have to take this all one day at a time.

TAKE FIVE WITH PATRICIA VONNE

Photo by Mark Guerra

Singer, songwriter, guitarist, actress, human rights advocate, the "Renaissance Woman of Austin," **Patricia Vonne** gives *Guitar Girl Magazine* her perspective on how her heritage filters through her music, how she absorbs the spirit of those who have come before and those around her, and how she draws on her instincts, experiences, and instruments for her new album *Top of the Mountain*. She has played tribute to players who have influenced her, and they have reciprocated by bringing her on tour (how cool is that?).

Find out more about her past, inspiration, and what lies ahead. Her struggle has made her stronger, but the view from the top is like none other.

Who were the musical influences that inspired you to be the musician you are today?
My newest album is *Top of the Mountain*. The title track was inspired by my dear friend Vincent Lopez who fought a long valiant battle with muscular dystrophy. He was confined to a wheelchair for most of his life, but he stood taller than most people. He reminds me to be grateful for everything in my life. Ironically, it mirrored a very hard time in my life. It made me truly realize the defiant human spirit in the midst of adversity and believing in the Higher Power to light our path. Embracing faith over fear. It's incredible how music can be the soundtrack of our lives.

My first musical connection to my heritage was listening to the music of the Mariachis. My parents always encouraged music in our house, so they would invite them over for family celebrations. My mother loved to play Spanish guitar and would teach us to harmonize with her on these Mexican folk songs. My father was a drummer in college and a hard-working traveling (door to door) salesman.

Another one of my fondest childhood memories was my mother taking us children to an old revival theater in San Antonio to see the Golden Age of Hollywood films. My favorites were The Red Shoes, MGM musicals, and of course, Hitchcock. That was family bonding time with our hotdogs, hamburgers, and soda pop that we'd stash inside the diaper bags for the whole brood. Watching these classics filled our hearts with pure joy. Can you imagine the impact of the soundtracks of Leonard Bernstein, Stephen Sondheim, Rogers & Hammerstein, Gershwin, and Cole Porter?

My vision for my music was a hybrid cultural menudo of sounds and flavors—Texas-influenced roots rock with a South of the Border flavor. Since I am ninth-generation Tejana and my ancestors are from Spain & Mexico, I wanted to incorporate Spanish castanets (that my mother taught me), flamenco-inspired dance, and mariachi influences. The songs I write are dramatic in flair and about Southwestern mythology, gypsy cowboys, rebel brides, Mexico, Spain, songs about my childhood in San Antonio, and being one of ten children.

Another early influence was Johnny Reno, and His Sax Maniacs from Fort Worth, Texas. When Reno took the stage, he owned it two hundred percent. He played with Stevie Ray Vaughan and Chris Isaak for many years.

Another big influence were the Cruzados from East LA (now known as "Tito and Tarantula"). They scored my brothers' films, *Desperado*, *From Dusk Till Dawn*, and *Machete*. I wrote a song called "El Cruzado" as a tribute to them on my debut album, and I got to join them for an eight-week tour of Europe as a member of their band! What a memory, forever a Tarantula!

Maria McKee from Lone Justice was a female rocker influence as well as Stevie Nicks and Pat Benatar. I love their songwriting, bravery, and grit.

Tell us about your songwriting process; do you start with lyrics or the chord progression or both?
My mom always told me, "the power lies in the songwriter," which is why all my albums are original and bilingual. It's a way to celebrate my Mexican-American heritage and to share it with the world.
I love simplicity, so I start with a song title, and it seems to write itself. For instance, "Severina" I wrote for my grandmother, who was from Rio Grande City, TX and had eleven children. "Joe's Gone Ridin'" is my tribute to Joe Ely. "Sax Maniac" is my homage to Johnny Reno. "Guitars and Castanets" is my tribute to Alejandro Escovedo. "Rebel Bride" is a righteous wedding song.

Songwriting for me is also very exciting when I get the opportunity to cowrite with musical heroes like Alejandro Escovedo, Doyle Bramhall, Alex Ruiz, Johnny Reno, Rosie Flores, Joe King Carrasco, Willie Nile, Peter Kingsbery, and Steven Medina Hufsteter of the Cruzados.

Please share with us your gear selection and how you use each instrument to create your sound.
I play a Gibson acoustic with heavy custom-made strings by Pyramid. It gives it a full round sound. I have a collection of castanets—different colors too.

Young women in music today are always looking for inspiration and advice. What would be your advice to aspiring young musicians today?
Life is an adventure, so really embrace it and take chances. Be true to yourself and make it a colorful road and unique. Be kind to yourself and do the best you can. I love Audrey Hepburn's quote, "Nothing is impossible, the word itself says 'I'm possible.'"

And lastly, here is an open-ended question: music to me means _____.
Music is the motivation for dance, joy, and inspiration. Music feeds the soul.

SUE FOLEY

KEEPING HER PROMISE

By Nikki O'Neill

Photo by Scott Doubt Photography

She moved to Austin after just turning twenty. Honed her blues guitar chops at Antone's by playing with the older touring legends who came through the famed club. She heeded her calling at the right place and at the right time: another younger local, Stevie Ray Vaughan, was taking the world by storm and putting Austin on the map. Since then, Sue Foley's faithful love for blues has taken her to concert stages around the world, with multiple awards and critically acclaimed albums to boot.

I called the Canadian guitarist, singer, songwriter, and recent winner of the Blues Music Awards to talk about the new album she's working on, the life-changing influence that Austin has had on her twice, and the rewards of digging deeper.

How is the corona pandemic affecting your work?
I'm putting all my efforts into a new recording project. We're at the end of a cycle and were planning to record soon anyway. Luckily for me, I'm not in the middle of touring for an album, so I didn't lose a whole bunch of work. Some got pushed back. So we're just riding it out.

Austin has played such an important part in your musical and personal life. What was it like when you moved there the first time? Who were the key people that helped you?
I moved there in 1990, and it was pretty awesome. I think I was twenty-one. Clifford Antone brought me in from Canada to be signed to his blues label, and with everybody who came through his club, he made sure that the young players got to play with the older players. He put me on the road with Buddy Guy, Johnny Winter, and Koko Taylor. When Albert Collins came into the club, I shot dice with him. I saw Earl King, Hubert Sumlin—you name it. The old way of teaching—to learn through direct transmission, was a big part of Clifford's philosophy.
I feel honored and privileged that I got to have that interaction because learning blues is an oral tradition that happens through generations. It's still happening. As blues artists, we pass down what we learn, but it's harder to access those direct channels now because almost all of those guys are gone. I got there when they were around, and there was a very vibrant blues scene world-wide as far as touring goes. There was nowhere I wanted to be more than Texas—the sound that was coming out of Austin at that time was it for me. So when they welcomed me, it was like I landed in heaven. I spent all of my twenties there, touring with all of these artists, learning at the club, making albums for Antone's, and really just honing my craft and learning how to play blues.

How did you start playing, and how did Clifford hear about you?
I started really young at thirteen, playing out professionally at sixteen, and by the time I was eighteen, I was touring around Canada. Angela Strehli, a fantastic and very important blues singer from the Austin scene, was helping Clifford with the label. She saw me at a festival and told him.

Were you always a solo artist, or were you ever a side player?
We toured behind Mark Hummel, a pretty well-known harmonica player in the Bay Area, and I played in the Antone's house band. I like being a sideman, but mostly I've been a solo artist as a touring artist.

Didn't you move back to Canada at one point?
Towards the end of the decade, I got pregnant and married and went home to Canada to have my son. But I took the teachings back with me and played up there and continued my career making albums while raising my kid because I wanted to raise him in my home country with my family close by.

And now you've returned to Austin. How did that happen?
I started returning when we were recording *The Ice Queen* (Foley's latest album,) which is almost three years ago. Mike Flanigin, an old friend of mine who now is my boyfriend, contacted me out of the blue and told me that Antone's had reopened (Clifford Antone passed away in 2006) and that I should come and play. I looked Mike up and saw what he had been up to musically. He had recorded an album, *The Drifter*, that I really liked, and then I started showing him tunes and asked him to produce my album. Somewhere along the way, we became a couple, and I started coming to Austin more regularly, and now I'm back.

What's your impression of the city today?
There's still great music in Austin, but everything in the whole world is more gentrified, more commercial, and more geared around money than it used to be. There's less live music than there used to be, and probably less gigs on the road than there used to be. But again, that goes across

world-wide, not just Austin.
What we were able to do as young people and the way that we were able to play and hone our skills is a lot harder to do now because you can't play out that much. The generation before us had so many more clubs, which stayed open later, and there were more sets per night to play. In the '80s and '90s, we were used to playing three sets a night, six nights a week. Twenty years prior to that, you'd play four to five sets per night, six nights a week.

That's great that you seized that opportunity when you were young.
I feel really lucky that I was able to do that because I don't know if I would have learned how to *really* play otherwise. You have to play a hell of a lot to get there. I don't play as much as I used to because there aren't as many opportunities—I would if I could.

You're also a great singer and songwriter. It isn't easy to do those three things well. Who are your influences, and how did you develop your style?
My favorite singer is probably Bessie Smith. My basic philosophy is to strip things down to their bare bones—I was always curious about who came before what. If I liked somebody, I always wanted to know who they studied to sound like they did. To me, Bessie Smith personifies how American blues and even jazz singing developed. If you love Frank Sinatra, he loved Billie Holiday, and she listened to Bessie Smith. So I keep reducing things to their basic essence if I can.

Do you do this out of historic interest, or do you think it helps in developing your own style?
I think if you can hone in on some of those basic building blocks in really early stuff, it helps with your own style, and it makes your whole thing better. It's like building a house on a strong foundation—you can go anywhere with that.

What about songwriting?
Songwriting is a little more complex because it developed differently, but early blues songs are really quite beautiful in their structure. Some of them are written so well, but there isn't a particular writer that I would lean on—it's the whole style. I would just go back to the early '30s and '40 s when songs developed a bit more. But I also got into Dylan and people like that. When I started to think more like a songwriter, I really leaned on Bob Dylan.

With the blues songs from the '40s, you often have that structure of an intro and the AABA verses.
But that's not a bad structure to learn. I basically don't lean on anything modern, if you haven't noticed! (laughs) But I do what I do, and I try to do it well. I don't try to be everything to everybody. I'm just trying to focus on what I'm able to do.

You have an interest in flamenco guitar, which we can hear in some of your songs, like "The Dance" (on *The Ice Queen*.) Is there any other new area that you're exploring as a guitarist right now? When we play lots of shows, we don't always have time to practice.
Right now, we have time to practice! (big laughs)
Basically, I've been going back to the things I talked about. I've been listening to a lot of Chicago blues and the Texas stuff that I grew up with, as we're planning our next album project. I'm leaning towards doing a blues album. You can't grab it all; sometimes, you have to go back to keep learning it. I just try to be specialized in what I do and stay focused. It's a personal choice of what you're into. I don't go in a lot of different directions. You're not gonna hear me trying to be a funk player. I will study some jazz, but I usually study a certain line so that I can keep my original focus. I love the flamenco and the Latin stuff and really enjoyed adding elements of that into my playing.

Your recent live shows have a great structure, with the solo acoustic segment in the middle, and then you gradually bring the band back in. It's not your typical blues show. How did you learn to create a good set?
By watching a lot of shows, watching my favorite artists, and deciding, 'what do I like?' I've almost always toured as a trio since my twenties, even though I've also played with a four-piece and with big bands. For a guitarist, playing in a trio can be really freeing and stimulating, but if you're having a bad night, man, you have nobody to lean on. But as you play more and get older, your consistency level gets better. To get better, you've got to play out a lot, and learn how to work every kind of audience in every kind of venue. And I've played from the smallest places to some pretty big venues, but every time you're at a gig, it's a different animal that you're encountering, and you've got to figure out how to get that particular audience to come with you.

Some performers are naturally extroverted and move around a lot on stage, while others would feel really awkward doing that. You have to find out what works with your vibe, right?
It just takes time. You've got to do a lot of it and for a long time. That's why I love blues because I'm fifty-one, and I'm just like 'prime time, baby.' In blues, the older you get, the more you have to give your audience because you've lived more, you can empathize with them more, and give them a personal experience on stage and make them happy. I wasn't always an expert performer; I don't even consider myself that now, but I feel very comfortable and confident with performing. I feel like I'm at a good age to express the deeper elements of this music, and I have a really good time.

How do you move an audience?
It's got to start with you. The more you dig into yourself and express something real, the more the audience will be attracted to you. But I'm speaking specifically about blues music. This doesn't necessarily translate to every other style. In blues, there's nowhere to hide. I think if you can explore blues music as a lesson, without necessarily having to be a blues musician, it'll make everything you do better.

You also do solo shows. When did you start doing that, and why?
I probably started with those when I was sixteen, since I've always played a lot of country blues, and I did that before playing electric. I learned how to accompany myself right away because I liked the independence of it. But I'm still developing that side of my thing. It's all about just hammering away at it, practicing, and doing it a lot until you get comfortable with it. Put yourself into every kind of situation—that's how you get skills.

Photo by Alan Messer

It's also good to be able to play a solo show or house concert in between the club gigs.
I really think that to survive now, you've got to do a lot. You've got to play in a lot of different combos and do different collaborations and projects. The more skills you have . . .

What do you do to diversify?
I play with my trio, and play with bigger bands and hire horn players at bigger shows or events. Sometimes I go out and play with Jimmy Vaughan, or do a solo show every now and then. I can also do a workshop. I write a column ("The Foley Files" for *Guitar Player Magazine*); I'm developing my *Guitar Woman* project (book with hundreds of interviews with female guitarists), and I attend school—the question is what the heck am I not doing? (laughs)

What's your current rig?
Fender Bassman '59 Reissue, with 4x10's, of course. Fender Telecaster—got several of them—but I mainly use the pink paisley one, the Japanese model. And then I just use a BOSS reverb, a Strymon tremolo/reverb unit, and an RC booster. I try not to use too many pedals. I don't like things to interrupt my tone, and I think pedals kind of wash your tone out.

Do you turn up pretty loud then and just control things with the volume knob on your guitar?
Yeah, I turn up to a healthy volume. When you play in a trio, you've got to have some balls.

And you play maple neck Teles, right?
Yeah, I'm not a big fan of rosewood. I find them sticky! (laughs) I don't know—I could be wrong—it's just my thing!

Here's the last question: some blues artists try to branch out to broader audiences, like the rock or soul crowd. Are you aspiring to that as well?
I'm going to do the opposite. I'm gonna be the best blues player I can be, and let them come to me. I applaud everybody for wanting to do what they want to do, but I'm not a rock artist. I just want to play blues. That's what I've been taught to do. There's not a lot of us around, and there's not a lot of us that got the education that I had, so I just want to continue to share that message that we got handed—it's part of my job, you know. There's nothing that turns me on more than slow blues!

RUTHIE FOSTER

IT'S ABOUT SETTING THE TABLE FOR JOY

By Alex Windsor

To say that **Ruthie Foster** has left her mark on American music would be an understatement. The three-time GRAMMY nominee has moved fluidly from genre to genre throughout her career, ranging from gospel to blues to folk to jazz, and the list goes on. She has shared the stage with the likes of the Allman Brothers and Bonnie Raitt, as well as earned countless awards. Her resume is undoubtedly impressive, but her musical skills are even more so.

Ruthie's warm, smooth voice melts on the soul like butter while her guitar echoes sweet chords and harmonies. Her journey began in a musical family and eventually led her to performing in the Navy and pursuing a career as a professional musician. Despite tempting offers from major labels, Ruthie stayed true to her roots and has proven that her music sounds best in its most authentic form. In her newest album, *Live From The Paramount*, Ruthie takes a whole new approach to dynamics and phrasing with the help of her big band. Though she is clearly not afraid to try new things, the heartbeat of her music is always consistent: love, loss, and finding joy in the darkest of times. With all of the uncertainty in the world right now, we need Ruthie Foster's music more than ever.

Photo provided by artist

First of all, how are you holding up during this pandemic? Are you using this downtime to rest, or stay creative?
You know, it's a little bit of both. A little bit of rest, but I've been creative. I try to write every day. These days, I try to pump out a song a week. I did a Livestream a couple of days ago too. But I have a nine-year-old as well, so she keeps me busy. Because, you know, all the kids are going through online schooling right now. So that keeps me learning as well. It's really interesting to watch what she's learning too.

When did you first realize that music would be a lifelong passion?
You know, I'm still wondering if that's going to work out. *[laughs]* Joking aside, I guess I knew pretty much as early on as my daughter's age—she's nine. I knew then that the music was going to be a part of something I wanted to do. I wasn't sure where my place in it would be, mostly because I grew up with a lot of great singers in my family and in the Baptist Church. I had cousins that were just really great singers. They would sing everywhere, on the bus on the way to and from school. It really had a way of moving the energy in the room when it came to singing, and I loved that. I wanted to be a part of that in some way. I actually saw myself more as a backup piano player or a guitar player than anything. I never really wanted to sing because I had so many great singers in my family. To me, that was like, "Oh, okay, well, you guys have that. I'll just play." So who knew that I would end up out front? But here I am. It's all part of the journey, I guess.

> It's important to know that you are worthy of being in this industry or any walk of life, really. Just walk and talk it, and you'll be all right. Because when no one else is validating you, you got your own back.

Do you feel like your sound has evolved over time?
I feel like it's still evolving, really. I guess my last CD kind of says that. It gave me a chance to go into a totally different realm, and that's big band music. That [CD] was important for me to put out for my fans. A lot of them heard me talk about being a big fan, but never really grabbed the concept of what I did, and that was something that was really fun for me to do—apart from the blues and the albums I've put out before. I'm hoping that this will be well received, and I can keep putting out more concept albums because I've got a background in a lot of different things. I went to school and studied voice. I was singing Italian and French arias before I was even allowed to sing pop music. A lot of folks don't know that, so there are a lot of surprises coming down the pike. I think my sound really evolved from singing gospel music as a kid to blues and folk music. The Beatles and James Taylor, those were the songs I started out learning on the guitar. I had a good book that had guitar chords. Most of the songs were Beatles songs that got me into playing folk music, then playing a lot of folk festivals, which I still do. So I think I do okay hopping around different genres in that way. My own music, the music that I write, is evolving all the time.

Your newest album, *Live at the Paramount*, consists of a full big band, with horn arrangements and everything. Do you feel like this enhances the original tone of your songs?
Oh, definitely. It's more interesting to be on stage when you've got horns behind you, especially brass, and they're blowing right at the back of your head. It's not about trying to outsing them; it's about changing your style. You're trying to sing in the "holes" or open spaces. I'll try to find a hole and sing into that. It's kind of like acrobatics onstage when it comes to singing with a big band. It's just so fun. The musicians were awesome readers, but they also have a great feel. They're not just looking at the page in front of them. They are really fantastic individuals. It was just a blast.

How did the song "Joy Comes Back" come to fruition for you?
My producer brought that song to me, and I just fell in love with that tune and what it says. I think it really applies to what's going on right now. We've got a lot of folks who don't spend a lot of time alone, and now they have to! I think the song is perfect for the atmosphere right now and giving people a little bit of hope. That's what the song did for me because I was in a place where I needed to hear it. And that's why I try to put out music that moves me, and says something to me, because I know I'm not by myself when I feel something. That's what I try to relay in the music that I pick for my albums. I try to pick out songs that I know are going to hit the heart, that folks can relate to. Nothing against the

blues, you know, but I like songs that talk about real-life issues too. That's what "Joy Comes Back" does for me. Also, it spoke to me in a way that my grandmother—I called her Big Mama—would speak to me. I would go to her and just sit at her feet when I was having a rough time, and she would always remind me, "Baby, it's just about setting the table. You got to set yourself up for what's coming. Just know it's on the way. Know that good things are on the way." So it's about setting the table for joy, and joy will just walk right on in. Just set yourself up for it. That's what that song says to me. It's like my Big Mama talking to me. So I wanted to spread that around.

What is the inspiration behind the powerful track "Phenomenal Woman"?
I wish I'd written it, but it's written by Dr. Maya Angelou. It's based off of one of her poems—this is just my interpretation. I just love what it says because I've been a huge Maya Angelou fan since I was a little girl. I had to record it because we need to hear it. We, as women, need to know that we are enough. That song just can't be sung enough for me. It's just a reminder that we're here, we're okay, and we're enough. It says, "I don't care what you think. I don't care what he or she thinks. I know I am plenty. You think you can handle this? Come on!"

What does the songwriting process look like for you?
It changes these days. I've got little bits and pieces of songs scattered all over from things I've sung into my phone to song titles. You should see my office right now! It's a mess because that's what I'm doing now—just finding bits and pieces of things that I've started and didn't finish. I found that's a good place to start. When you don't know where to start, just start with a little bit of something and see where it goes. With this quarantine going on, that's been my homework. I get in my studio, and I'll find a title and go from there. I'll spend about three or four days working on the verse. I might even start with the chorus, something that just moves me enough to sing it over and over again. I'll think, "Okay, that's a chorus. All right, so I can work from the middle and go out." Sometimes it's just picking up the guitar and finding a riff I like and then putting words to that. Sometimes I use music software, and I'll pull up a drum track and just write to that. It changes, really.

Tell us about your version of the classic Johnny Cash tune, "Ring of Fire." What inspired you to take this song in a new direction?
I was living in a place where I had my studio in my bedroom, and I had just come back from a two-month tour. I was just beaten up. I remember getting up in the middle of the night, dragging myself over to the piano, and just playing chords that just felt good to play. Those were the words that came out when I decided to sing to it—"Ring of Fire." The chords just really work well together. I love major sevenths, and so you hear a few of those in there. It was just one of those quiet nights, and I think I was sick, too, full of Nyquil. [laughs] It turns out I had a chance to do this for Rosanne Cash, and she loves it! She said, "You know, it really captures that love affair that they had between each other. It's kind of giving you the other side of their story." I think it's really, really cool that she really enjoyed that version of it. She told me, "That was the second-best version of that song I've ever heard!"

Do you have a favorite guitar?
No, not really. I tend to give my guitars away after a while. Once I've gotten what I can out of them, I try to auction them off or just enter them into a contest so someone else can put their magic in it. There's a Gibson that I play right now, and she's just waiting to be played. There are about four or five guitars hanging on my wall. I do like to have a guitar out just so that I keep playing it. I tell people all the time who have guitars, "Get them out of the cases. Get them out of the closet. Just get a stand. If anything, just have it out so that it's waiting to be played." What's the use of having a guitar if you don't have it out? One of my favorite ones that I have out is my dobro. That one is sitting out in my living room. I call her Jessie Mae. She just makes the whole living room shine. I love it. I love showing her off. She's like part of the conversation when I do have people over.

What advice do you have for other likeminded artists?
I would say know your worth. Walk and talk that. Because as women, we get underestimated all the time. It's important to know that you are worthy of being in this industry or any walk of life, really. Just walk and talk it, and you'll be all right. Because when no one else is validating you, you got your own back. Know that there are people out there that will lift you up too. It's okay to ask for help because there are people who will not only lift you but carry you when you need that. Just for a little while, at least. So know your worth, know that you are enough.

TONE TALK WITH ***JENNY REYNOLDS***

Jenny Reynolds moved to Austin in 2003 from New England, and her motto is, "Work hard, be nice, keep moving." Since moving to Austin, she has performed at the legendary Threadgill's, the Cactus Café, SXSW, and other local festivals. She had the opportunity to work with Ruthie Foster and Ian Mclagan and was named the "Best New Local Act" in Austin Chronicle's 2005 Critics Poll. Her music has been heard on ABC soap operas, *All My Children* and *General Hospital*.

Reynolds will be releasing a new recording titled "Any Kind of Angel" on June 19, 2020, which was produced by Mark Hallman and Andre Moran at Congress House Studios.

What is your definition of tone, and how has it changed over the years?
Guitar tone is the sound created by 1) the attack of the fingers or picks on the string(s), 2) the instrument (i.e., OM acoustic or semi-hollow electric), and 3) the electronics used to amplify the sound of the instrument. My tone changed when I added semi-hollow guitar to the types of guitars I play. It made me use flat wound strings.

Which guitars, amps, and pedals are you currently using and why?
Collings OM (it's like a fifth limb), Gibson 359 (I like humbuckers and smaller body shapes). I am between amps right now but am leaning toward a Blues Junior or the MilkMan pedal. I have to save up.

What about strings?
D'Addario light gauge on the acoustic, and D'Addario light gauge (12s) flat wound strings on the semi-hollow.

Are there certain recording techniques you prefer in the studio?
I prefer Mark Hallman at Congress House Studio in Austin. This may not sound like a "technique," but I think it is most important to work with people you like and trust. You're going to be with them a lot.

How do you keep your sound consistent onstage?
It's important to practice exactly the same way you perform. When possible, use the same instruments and the same amps, electronics, etc.

Am pent scale nine in fifth position. Then I go from easy songs to harder songs.

What is your advice for young women who hope to work in the music industry?
Be specific about what you want from a sound technician, and then be kind and patient as they work on it. Learn how to describe the sound(s) you like.

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CHARLIE FAYE & THE FAYETTES

A MODERN-DAY '60S GIRL GROUP

By Emmaria Cumiskey

Photo by Eryn Brooke

Austin trio **Charlie Faye & the Fayettes,** made up of **Charlie Faye** and backup vocalists **BettySoo** and **Akina Adderley,** have been referred to as a "modern-day '60s girl group." They released their second album, *The Whole Shebang*, earlier this year via Burnside Distribution. The twelve tracks evoke '60s girl groups melodies and harmonies with messages of falling in love, independence, and empowerment.

For the release of the album, Faye explained, "I'm still influenced by '60s girl groups, but this time around, other elements came into play too. I wanted us to start venturing a little more into the early '70s, as so many of the great girl groups did."

Faye has also inked a deal with Rough Trade Publishing, to which Faye, in a press release statement, says, "I'm so excited to be working with [them]. They're a badass company and a great group of people and I couldn't be happier to have them on our team. I know they'll be working to get us more opportunities in sync, and that's something that's really exciting to me."

Songs from their self-titled debut album have appeared on y already had some success in licensing their music for television. Their self-titled debut album had songs placed on television shows, including *Riverdale*, *Girlboss*, and *Seal Team*.

Faye fills us in on influences, the trio, and motherhood.

Both you and the Fayettes started as solo artists. You've mentioned that the switch felt like a logical next step for you, but was it difficult to transition from making decisions independently to making them as part of a group?
It's definitely a different thing, but the three of us work really well together. As the leader of the group, I make most of the decisions, but I almost always ask BettySoo and Akina for their input, and I trust their opinions like nobody else's. I love having two smart, talented friends in the band who I can bounce ideas off of. They also arrange most of the background vocals and even sometimes produce my vocals, cause they're both amazing at that.

You have an adorable baby named Edie Faye. She has obviously affected your ability to be active in the music world in the short term, but do you think having a young child will have any long-term effects on your perspective toward music?
Actually, I planned to be working again in March, starting with SXSW. We had an official showcase and a couple of cool parties booked. I took a few months off after giving birth, but it was the pandemic that really affected my ability to be out there playing music, not becoming a mother.

Do you think you'll get back to working as soon as you can, or will you take more time to spend with your family?
I am definitely re-evaluating how to do music right now. It's a difficult time for everyone in the music industry, and for everyone really, and I think we're all just trying to figure out how to make things work in this new world. I love performing and playing live, and I have no idea how long it'll be before I can do that again. So I'm focusing more on writing and licensing music for TV and film right now. I have a publishing deal with a great company called Rough Trade, and I'm very glad to have that avenue for my music.

You're currently at the forefront of "retro-revival," as your band draws a lot of inspiration from the Sixties. What drew you to focus your sound around that era?
I've always loved music from that era since I was a little kid. I was introduced to Otis Redding, Solomon Burke, and The Ronettes when I was nine years old, thanks to a little movie called *Dirty Dancing* (and thanks to my mom letting me watch it). It was my favorite movie, and I was obsessed with the soundtrack. Then again later in my life, I came back around to '60s pop and soul. In my twenties, I dug deep into the Stax catalog and couldn't get enough.

Did you have any musical influences growing up that you feel affected your current sound or taste in music?
In addition to the *Dirty Dancing* soundtrack, I was obsessed with Carole King. I used to write her letters and send her presents. I had every word of Tapestry memorized and would annoy my siblings by singing it on family car trips. She's definitely been a big influence on me. I love that she was a staff writer and wrote so many hits for pop groups in the '60s, and then became a successful solo artist in the "singer-songwriter" genre in the '70s. There's not as big a difference between those two genres as you might think. It's all about good songwriting.

Could you see yourself making music in a different genre in the future, or is this what really feels good to you?
I love the straight-up girl group stuff, but I'm also very influenced by artists like Nick Lowe, Elvis Costello, and Rockpile, and if you listen, you'll hear that on the Fayettes records too. A song like "Stone Cold Fox" has more in common with Rockpile than the Ronettes. And our song "Heart" was directly influenced by Nick Lowe's "Heart." So that's another genre I feel very comfortable in.

Your first album was produced by Dave Way, who also worked with the likes of Michael Jackson and Fiona Apple. What was that like?
Dave is fantastic. He's got a great vibe and a great studio, and he's a joy to work with. Not to mention, he makes everything sound like a million bucks!

Are there any other producers that you would like to work with in the future?
Sure there are. I've actually reached out to a few in recent months to talk about working on some new songs. I have a good stash of material written, and I'm excited to figure out the right producer to team with to develop the sound of the next album.

THE INSPIRING GINA CHAVEZ

on her Diverse Sound, New Releases, and the Motivation Behind her Empowering Music

By Victoria Shaffer

Guitarist and singer-songwriter Gina Chavez is a versatile artist, whose signature sound ranges from Spanish/English music to folk-pop, soul/R&B, and whatever inspires her next. As an Austin native, she has found strength and motivation through the hardworking and supportive music scene she grew up in. Unafraid to explore, and prepared to write and release music that champions representation and empowerment, Gina filled us in on what inspires her message, her favorite guitars, her two most recent releases, "She Persisted" and "Ella," and much more.

What inspired you to become a musician?
Ever since I was a kid, I've loved to sing. I was fortunate to have great public school choir teachers in middle school and high school, who taught me how to sing life into notes on a page. I didn't realize it then, but those years would set the stage for a life full of music.

At what age did you begin playing guitar?
I picked up a guitar at eighteen after seeing Austin singer Toni Price at the Continental Club. That show inspired me to rescue my dad's 1954 Martin guitar from the closet and take it to my college dorm. I was immediately hooked by the rhythmic nature of guitar and—too lazy to learn other people's songs—I decided to write my own. Since then, I've been blessed with incredible people and opportunities, who've gently shoved me into recording albums and pursuing music as a career.

Which female musicians inspired you and your sound?
Oddly enough, Toni Price—who doesn't play guitar—was the one who inspired me to pick one up. That night, something in her performance inspired me to want to take the stage, but I didn't want to have to wait for a guy to accompany me on guitar. I figured I'd just play it myself.

Do you have a specific brand of guitar or gear you prefer to use when recording or playing live?
I'm a big fan of the Gibson and Epiphone guitar family. I have a vintage dark burst Gibson ES 390 at home—I love the P90 pickups!—and an Epiphone Casino that I won in the John Lennon Songwriting Contest in 2014. It's become my go-to road warrior for the last few years. Both guitars are hollow bodies, which give me some of the rhythmic punch of an acoustic.

Growing up in Austin, TX, how do you feel the Austin music scene has influenced your sound?
Oddly enough, I feel like I'm a bit of an outlier when it comes to what most people consider the "Austin sound." Of course, it's hard not to love Willie and Stevie, but I have always been drawn to sounds that lie far beyond the borders of Austin, the state of Texas, or even this country. That said, I'm still very much a product of this creative city. I think the diversity of my sound speaks to the creative diversity of Austin and our collective love for originality.

How do you feel the Austin music scene differs from others around the country?
We Austinites love our creators. We have incredible organizations that support creators, especially musicians, making sure we have access to quality health care and mental health services. Our fans love original music, and we musicians truly support each other. We push each other to be better, but it's never cutthroat, and that's what I love about Austin. It's very homegrown.

At what age did you begin writing music?
I started writing at eighteen when I was a journalism major at UT Austin. I was honestly too lazy to learn other people's songs, so I started writing my own. I remember writing one of my early songs, "St. Anthony," while sitting in my chemistry class!

Your new song, "She Persisted," is an awesome tune about female empowerment. Is there a specific incident that inspired this song?
I wrote this song two days after Mitch McConnell silenced Elizabeth Warren on the Senate floor. By then, "Nevertheless, She Persisted" had become a worldwide hashtag because it's exactly what women do. We persist.

Photo by Ismael Quintanilla III

Is female empowerment an important component of all of the music you create?
Representation is indeed everything. We NEED more songs about women, for women, by women. Just as we need more songs that celebrate love in all its forms. Our world is beautiful because of its diversity, and music is an incredible way to celebrate that. My single, "Ella," is the Spanish language sister song to "She Persisted." It honors the Latina experience of persistence in machista societies and that same need to get loud.

Do you often pull from personal experience when writing your music?
Definitely, but I also try to dive deep enough into others' experiences to feel what it's like to walk in their shoes. My biggest hope is that I can use the stage I've been given to spread understanding for others.

In 2014, you released a Spanish/English album called *Up.Rooted*. How was the process of creating this album, and why was it important to you to incorporate both Spanish and English in your lyrics?
I'm half Mexican, half Swiss-German, and fully Texan. Like so many others, I didn't grow up around those roots, but I've always felt very drawn to my Latino side. Music, for me, has been the doorway to not only learn about but truly embrace and share the beauty of my family's culture. Since I didn't grow up speaking Spanish, it's still difficult for me to write in Spanish, but doing so allows me to access another part of my voice, my soul. *Up.Rooted* was the first time I truly stepped into that other part of my soul, like a curious child opening the door to a room she's never stepped foot in. It was scary but mostly exhilarating, and an experience I love to share with audiences through my recordings and on stage.
It's sad to me that our country, built by immigrants, is a place so driven by an us-versus-them mentality. My music, my message, is that our diversity is what makes us beautiful, not our sameness. I am Catholic and a married lesbian. I am Latina and I am white. I can be in different worlds as a bridge, not a wall that divides.

You're a versatile artist known to have created Spanish/English music, folk-pop, and soul/R&B. What is it that inspires you to continually explore different genres?
Good question! Maybe I just get bored with the same sounds all the time. I am definitely driven by rhythm. I would say that's the glue to my music, but those rhythms are broad and encompass sounds that inspire me from around the world.

You've been featured on NPR's three nationally broadcast shows: *First Listen*, *All Things Considered*, and *Tiny Desk Concerts*. What has performing on these shows meant to you, and what lessons have you taken away from those experiences?
That I am capable of so much more than I ever thought, I am someone who has spent my life making myself small. But that's the epitome of false humility. True humility owns the gifts one has and puts them to work for others. These experiences on a national level have taught me the value of owning what I have been given and being truly grateful enough to share my voice with the world. Because if I can do it, then you can too. Every voice matters.

You released your fourth album, a Spanish/English album, *La Que Manda*, in May. How was the process of writing and recording this album, and what are you most excited for fans to hear?
This is my first mostly Spanish release and incorporates a lot of new sounds. *La Que Manda* is the story of a woman coming into her own power. And I hope it's the soundtrack for women everywhere! We are powerful beyond measure if only we have the eyes to see it. I just released the second single, "Ella," and it's a gut punch.

TONE TALK WITH ***MANDY ROWDEN***

I'm an Austin, TX-based singer-songwriter, multi-instrumentalist, teacher, and founder of Girl Guitar Austin, a comprehensive rock and roll school for women. To date, I've released three albums of original music and am working on the fourth as we speak! My influences range from rockers like Tom Petty, Neil Young, and The Rolling Stones to singer-songwriters like Lisa Loeb, Lucinda Williams, and Neil Young (again) to the heroes of my classical youth like Vivaldi and Chopin. Besides writing and touring my original music, I teach nonstop for Girl Guitar, am a regular guest clinician for Own Your Own Universe, the camp musician for Lucky Star Art Camp, and a songwriter for Songs for the Soul—all things I genuinely love and am deeply proud to be part of!

What is your definition of tone, and how has it changed over the years?
I'm a fan of the big fat acoustic fingerpicking tone of Steve Earle and have tried to copy it several times in recent years. I get a decent copycat sound out of my Fishman Platinum Pro playing on my Gibson J-45. I used to play through an LR Baggs Venue that I really loved, but as my playing and tastes evolved, I've found myself more comfy on stage with the extra flexibility I get out of the Platinum.

Which guitars, amps, and pedals are you currently using and why?
When I play acoustic, I swap between my Gibson J-200 and my J-45, and I run them both through my Fishman Platinum Pro. For electric, I play my Les Paul Custom through a Supro Black Magick Reverb amp that sounds like heaven—loud, thundering, beautiful heaven. My pedalboard includes several pedals from Austin-based Durham Electronics like the Sex Drive (boost), the Zia Drive (overdrive), and the Reddverb (reverb). Durham's pedals give me the vintage color I want, and they take me back to the kind of '70s feel I dig in electric tone.

What about strings?
Elixir all the way, baby. 80/20 Bronze NANOWEB for acoustic and POLYWEB for my electrics.

Are there certain recording techniques you prefer in the studio?
On the album I'm currently working on with producer Matt Smith (6 String Ranch, Austin, TX), I'm playing all the guitars and lap steels on the record. I'm really enjoying getting deep into the songs and layering instruments with the no-pressure atmosphere provided there.

How do you keep your sound consistent onstage?
Like all working musicians, I run circles to keep my gear in top shape with frequent setups, new strings, fresh batteries, etc. It's hard to always stay consistent in different rooms, but keeping it dialed in is important to me. Learning to communicate with sound people has been key.

What does your practice consist of?
I love woodshedding, so aside from writing and working on new songs, I constantly go back to my "bibles"—Sal Salvador's *Single String Studies for Guitar* and Matt Smith's *Chop Shop*.

What is your advice for young women who hope to work in the music industry?
Get smart, and take it seriously. Gone are the days of women as tokens and getting by on feminine charm. Women are stepping up more and more all the time to fill the really substantial roles in the industry, so go ahead and learn the gear, carry your own stuff, and be prepared to work really hard. Then just have a great time and enjoy the ride!

Photo by Mark Maryanovich Photography

Photo by Kim Maguire

THE MISSION OF TERRI HENDRIX

LEAVE THIS WORLD AND THOSE IN IT BETTER THAN I FOUND THEM

By Enmaria Cuminsky

Terri Hendrix's latest work, Project 5, is a series of four thematically linked, but stylistically diverse, albums plus a book, *The Girl with the Exploding Brain*, which deals with her lifelong struggle with a seizure disorder.

At the heart of Project 5 is an inspiring message of courage. During the making of it, she dealt with a lot of challenges: double pneumonia, losing her sister, managing her label, writing, recording, closing on a twelve-acre farm where she runs a center for creative arts, and dealing with insurance companies due to her ongoing medical condition. Bet she perseveres.

You've been in this industry for decades now. Having released eighteen albums since your first in 1996, especially on your own record label, do you think your sound has changed a lot since that first album?
Yes. I like grittier tones these days, and I have definitely incorporated more harmonica into my overall productions.

What do you think caused that change?
Every time I pick up a new instrument, I add a new tone to my current sound. I have found that changing instruments up has really helped me with my sound. For example, a baritone C harp is gonna have a different tone than a regular C harp. A baritone mandolin is gonna have a different tone than a regular mandolin.

What was the mastermind behind your label, Wilory?
I could not get a label to sign me. So I started my own label. I named it after my friend Marion Williamson. She was a great guitarist and taught me how to fingerpick. She had a property that she called Wilory Farm. So I named my label "Wilory Records."

Struggling with your medical condition in silence for so long, and recently going public a few years ago and more in-depth in your book, how has it affected your experiences as a touring musician?
I had to go public. By doing so, I have been able to help others. I have continued to tour and perform in spite of my diagnosis. That said, I no longer do the long tours I once did. Things are much more streamlined to achieve optimum health.

Do you find it easier to manage now that you're open with your audience about it?
I can manage it. What's impossible is fighting insurance and pharmaceutical companies.

How did writing a book compare to writing songs?
I'm still working on the book and have been since 2003. It's grueling. Keeping the chapters straight

and the facts in line with my medical records have been a challenge. The book's body parts are in eight extra-large plastic tubs. I released my last book in 2010. That one was hard too.

Your primary instrument is the guitar. Do you have preferences when it comes to guitars and amps, and what are you currently using?
I have three guitars I am crazy about. I love my dreadnought J-45 Gibson custom acoustic. I love the way it responds up the neck on the high strings. When I use a capo, it still keeps the body in the tone. I am thrilled with my CA Composite. It stays in great tune. The Texas heat doesn't bother it. It's my main instrument I play live. It has a cutaway and handles capos without an issue. The neck is thinner and, therefore, easier on my hands. I recently picked up a custom guitar handcrafted by a luthier in Texas named Neal Peterson. My guitar is made out of mesquite and other native woods, and parts of a piano. He takes the wood off of tossed out pianos and merges them with other sources of wood to create playable pieces of art. Great man, and my guitar is sweet. Nice sweet tone and handles country blues fingerpicking easily.
I like my Fishman Loudbox acoustic amp. Is this thing EVER versatile? I use it as a PA sometimes. I definitely use it as my DI and monitor for my instrument.

As a multi-instrumentalist, what other instruments do you play?
Harp, mandolin, and I'm learning to play piano.

Speaking of instruments, what is your definition of tone?
I call it the tone within the tone. A great example of this is Vicki Genfan. When she plays guitar, the guitar is featured and not her playing the guitar. She is able to give the instrument a voice. To me, that is tone. When it is not so much the person playing it or their gear, but when the instrument itself is speaking and creating a dialogue to the listener.

You run an organization called *Own Your Own Universe*, which aims to 'empower and transform lives through music and the creative arts.' Share with us a little about OYOU and a few memorable moments?
The OYOU got started in 2012. I wanted to help others find their voice artistically. I've taught lots of workshops over the years and played lots of shows, and I wanted to do something to merge everything into one center and make it free or affordable for people to attend. I also wanted to merge my involvement with those with special needs. Those with special needs deserve access to the arts and a welcoming and non-judgmental place to enjoy them. I have too many memories to count.

> I like my Trace acoustic amp. When you need more vocal, they are going to give you attitude.

I believe your organization relies on a lot of in-person appearances. What have you done to continue performing during the shutdowns due to COVID-19?
Well, I'll be honest in saying that in the real world, no one as dysfunctional as the current President of the United States would be able to keep their job. And yet, he has. So I have kind of been preparing for the worst since he was elected. The OYOU runs on a thin budget, so overhead is low. All classes went from in-person to online. We were back up and running in a day. On the for-profit end, I do special "Live from Wilory Farm" concerts streamed online. They saved my hide. I will continue to do these concerts and merge more and more into this being a steady income stream for me. I keep my overhead low, work long hours, and curb my optimism. I can control my actions. Stay ahead of what might be coming down the pipeline nationally.

Singer-songwriter, author, entrepreneur, performing artist, and farm handler; how do you juggle it all?
I work pretty hard. I have a mission. Leave this world and those in it better than I found them. Everything answers to that mission. I also think of the different hats as one job. That's the job of writing songs and to treat each day like a verse in the chorus.

It seems your creative mind never stops! What's next?
I want to keep doing what I'm doing. I'd like to learn Spanish and to really be able to play piano. I want the OYOU to continue to grow and to reach more people.

Finally, do you have any advice you would like to offer for young women hoping to break into the music industry?
Be yourself. Everyone else is taken. Fight the demons that have outposts in your head. Carry mace and have it ready to use when you use a public restroom. Don't ever leave gear in your car or in the trunk of your car. If you have to leave it in your car, lay a black tablecloth over it. It makes it hard for anyone to see there is anything in the car. I use pink duct tape on the ends of my guitar chords. I also use it on all of my stands. I even put a piece on each of my mics. I also wrap it around the handle of my bags. Everything is black backstage, especially at a festival or multi-artist event. I'm able to locate and grab my stuff easier with the pink duct tape markings. Sometimes a sound person won't listen to you. I like my Trace acoustic amp. When you need more vocal, they are going to give you attitude. I like my Beta 58 to get more gain. It is prone to feedback, but it definitely helps. I use my Fishman Loudbox all the time. That has solved the low guitar in the monitor. I have control of my own sound without it affecting the mains. Last, you are important, and you have something to say. Go for it.

The University of Texas at Austin
Butler School of Music
College of Fine Arts

The **Guitar Department at the University of Texas at Austin's Butler School of Music** was founded by guitarist virtuoso and maestro extraordinaire **Professor Adam Holzman**. Both he and his students have been internationally recognized and highly awarded for their exceptional skills and performances. It is extremely rare to find an artist with the supreme talent of Professor Holzman, who also has a passion for guiding others to become future masters.

Grace Pettis

ON EARLY INFLUENCES, THE AUSTIN MUSIC SCENE, AND THE IMPORTANCE OF VULNERABILITY AND SELF-REFLECTION IN SONGWRITING

By Victoria Shaffer

Photo by Nicola Gell Photography

Singer, songwriter, and Austin, TX-based musician, Grace Pettis uses self-reflection and vulnerability as a means to craft honest, relatable, and cathartic music. Pettis' admiration for the Austin scene resides in the city's music community, which is built on the support and championing of one another. A prime example of a hardworking and dedicated musician, Pettis spoke with *Guitar Girl Magazine* about all things Austin, her many female influences, and her captivating debut single with MPress Records, "Landon."

Who/what was it that motivated you to become a musician?

I've never really wanted to do anything other than play and write music. When I was a very little girl, I would go around the house, making up songs, and plunking them out on the piano. Music has never felt like a choice. It's more of a reflex or a compulsion. It's hard to tell what the motivation is for me. Maybe it's a way to understand the world or to be understood by others—I'm not sure. But even if I were doing something else with my life, I'd still come home at the end of the day and write songs and sing. When I've had day jobs, I've written songs on receipt paper. So, for me, it's more a question of 'How can I do this as much as possible and make enough money not to have to do anything else?'

At what age did you begin playing guitar?

I started playing guitar when I was fifteen. My first instrument was piano. There were lots of piano lessons when I lived with my mom. But then, for high school, I moved in with my dad. My grandparents in Alabama had a piano, and I would stay with them twice a week, which gave me an opportunity to practice and write a few songs on piano. Otherwise, I was limited to my dad's non-weighted, quiet, and decidedly unexciting keyboard. So I picked up a guitar. I quickly learned that guitars are great for songwriting—just four chords and a capo, and you're in business.

Which female musicians and artists inspired you and your sound?

I listened to a lot of R&B when I was in middle school and high school. I was drawn to women with big voices and something to say. I was a devotee of Lauryn Hill, Destiny's Child, TLC, Pink, Mary J Blige, Maya, Christina Aguilera, India Arie, and Alicia Keys. I also got into jazz and soul singers, thanks to a piano teacher turning me on to Billie Holiday. That led me to Ella Fitzgerald, then to Etta James and Aretha Franklin. My mom took me to a Bonnie Raitt concert, which changed my life. My mom listened to a lot of traditional Irish sean-nós singers. I couldn't tell you any of their names, but that style of singing made its way into my subconscious for sure. She also loved a lot of the same folk singer-songwriters my dad listened to, so there was a steady diet of that too.

On the songwriting side, I was listening to the Indigo Girls, who were my mom's favorite band. And my mom introduced me to Joni Mitchell's *Blue* album, which I will forever be grateful to her for. My dad would bring home CDs he'd traded his own for on tour, and he'd always tell me about the female musicians he thought were great. Sometimes he'd come home with those great Paste sampler CDs too. Because of my dad and my stepmom, I was listening to Susan Werner, Lisa Aschmann, Sara Hickman, Jill Phillips, Traci Chapman, Patty Griffin, Diana Krall, Norah Jones, and Sara Watkins (Nickel Creek.)

Country came later—not until college when I got into the country greats: Dolly Parton, Patsy Cline, and Loretta Lynn. I'd heard a lot of country growing up, of course, on the radio and from my friends—'90s country stars like Martina McBride, the Dixie Chicks, and Faith Hill were always on my radar, and I thought they were great. I never liked many of the dudes on country radio, and that turned me off to a lot of the genre, to be honest. In the same way that I loved Missy Elliot, but otherwise never could get that excited about all the rap I was immersed in, growing up in Atlanta. There weren't many women rappers that my friends and I knew about. That was a barrier to me relating to any of it, especially since I couldn't dance.

Do you have a particular brand or make of gear and instrument that you prefer to use when recording or playing live?

I play a truly wonderful instrument, a Moonstone guitar, given to me by a friend when I first started out in music. It is a priceless gift. I've never felt worthy of it, but I keep on playing it anyway. I also have a Gallagher guitar. It's another dream guitar. I won that one in a contest. It's pretty different from the Moonstone. It's more of a bluegrass guitar. The Moonstone sounds like a bell. It's small-bodied and delicate. The Gallagher is the guitar next door. It's big and strong. Between the two, I've never felt like I needed another guitar. I use Elixir strings (Polyweb lights), and I've been singing into a Shure Beta 87A lately.

Being from Austin, how did the music scene in your city influence you?

I moved to Austin when I was eighteen, right out of high school. I started going to any shows I could get into, which at first meant concerts at Blue Rock Studio in Wimberley, Texas, and folk concerts that my church, Journey Imperfect Faith Community, put on. My lack of a car and money put a damper on my ability to go see a lot of shows. For a while, I was taking the bus late at night to go to open mics, but my roommate was mugged at one point and tearfully begged me not to do that anymore. So I stopped taking the bus at night. I was too young for bars, mostly, although I sang harmonies for Dave Madden at Momo's a few times, and a couple of friends like Wendy Colonna snuck me into a few as the merch girl, or via the guest list. I was too poor to pay to see music. At the time, I was sleeping on a mattress on the floor of my student apartment and eating mostly ramen and jello. I never had ten dollars for a cover.

Billy and Dodee Crockett are mostly responsible for exposing me to great music. They let me come out to Blue Rock Studio (I'd hitch a ride with my friend Judi from church) and volunteer so that I got to see all the artists for free. That's how I first heard Ruthie Foster and a bunch of other greats. That same friend, Judi, also drove me out to the Bugle Boy in La Grange, where I started entering the songwriting contest. The Bugle Boy was another huge part of my musical education. So many wonderful artists came through there. Judi also took me to my first Kerrville Folk Festival, which jumpstarted my songwriting life in a big way. That first Kerrville, I wrote like five songs and made about a billion Texas songwriter friends.

What is the best part about being an Austin-based musician?

Lots of cities have great music scenes. But I've never lived anywhere that actually cares about its musicians as much as Austin does. Austin has less of the industry stuff: agents, managers, record labels, etc. I mean, we have SXSW, but otherwise, we're mainly a town full of musicians and venues, not a town full of music industry. The musicians here are more interested in playing regularly, making art, and being part of a tribe than they are in "making it," whatever that means. It's a family. We're less competitive here than musicians in other towns. We help each other out and tell each other about opportunities. It feels more collaborative and more open-hearted. I think that influences the music.

One of the many, many hard things about this current COVID-19 crisis is that none of us know if our music tribe will be here in a few months. The music scene here has been absolutely gutted by this. Venues are fighting to survive, and some of my friends have already started packing up to leave Texas and move back home. It might not be long before I have to do that too. Every musician I know here puts it together piecemeal. We're driving for Uber and Lyft on the side, or bartending or walking dogs. This is already an expensive place to live. We already have housemates and side hustles. We all depend on that "gig economy" for survival. It's not just that we can't play shows right now, we don't have any of that other work to fall back on either. I hope, when the dust clears, that the music will come back. It's hard to say if the scene will survive. And without the musicians, Austin just wouldn't be Austin.

Having released two DIY albums, what do you feel working independently taught you?

Working independently has taught me many things. I am always hustling, and I rarely take a day off. I know that things can change on a dime, so I don't take success for granted, and I don't take no for an answer. I've definitely been through my fair share of rejection, resignation, and doubt. There are good times and bad times. Good times don't last forever, and neither do bad times. I am not a born business person, and like most musicians, I'd rather focus on the art. But being a musician today means being a small business owner. That doesn't change, even when you start having more help. At the end of the day, even though I have a great team around me now—management, label, publicist—I am still responsible for my income. I never forget that.

You are now signed to MPress Records. Congratulations! What are you most looking forward to in this new venture, and in which ways do you feel it will influence your music career?

Thank you! I don't think of my record deal as a silver bullet or a golden ticket. It's much better than that. It means that I have a team of hardworking, dedicated, passionate people behind me. It's an indescribable blessing to have MPress in my corner; to know that there are people on the other end of the phone who have my back and who are invested in my success. I hope I never take that for granted. Already, I've seen that more people on the team means the ability to do more and to take this thing further. We have big dreams for this first record we're making together. We're all working hard, so I'm looking forward to finding out what fruit that will yield. I've learned a lot even in the past few months from Rachael Sage and her team. I know that working with her and MPress will hold me accountable and make me better at my job. It's a great feeling.

When did you first begin writing songs?

I started writing songs about the same time I started talking. Pretty much from the time I could put together a sentence, I was singing those sentences and making up songs. I would sing about whatever I was doing; 'I'm going to the potty, I'm tying my shoes!', etc. When I was a few years older, I'd enlist my mom's help in writing down notes on sheet music so I could play them, painstakingly, note by note on the piano. I learned the basics of sight-reading from piano lessons, but I "cheated" a bunch with piano. I mainly played from memory or by ear. I was lazy about music theory. I never had a lot of patience for it. I filled up journals and diaries and relied on my memory for melodies. I still have those journals somewhere in storage—lots of terrible, terrible lyrics. And no idea what any of the melodies are now.

When writing, are you always pulling inspiration from real-life experiences?

I think so. I do write a lot about fictional characters, though. And even when I draw from personal experience, I've been known to change details here and there to make things rhyme better or to tell a better story. I reserve that right. But I think even the most fictional songs come from a place that's true in me. The songs that ring the truest often come from my own feelings and memories.

Your debut single with MPress Records, "Landon," has a beautiful sense of vulnerability. Could you tell us a bit about what inspired this song?

My best friend from high school, Landon, is gay. We went to school in a small, very conservative, very religious Alabama town, so he waited until after graduation to tell a few trusted friends and family. I was one of the first people he told, and I let him down. My job, in that moment, was to listen and to support him. He was being very brave—owning his own story—in spite of the fact that where we came from, pretty much everyone believed that being gay was wrong, including me. I responded with the canned answers I had readied to go, instead of just listening and telling him I loved him. Apparently, my reaction was one of the nicer ones he received, which horrifies me.

I think the country is changing, just like I've changed. We're opening our minds and hearts, and we're coming to understand that being gay is not a choice and that the queer community needs our acceptance and advocacy. Some of us have come around to that. Some of us are still on that journey. But pretty much every straight person I know older than twenty-five has some complicity in the hate and discrimination that the gay community has been met with. So we all have to own that. We can't move forward until we tell that truth. It took me years of wrestling with my own conscience and soul searching to realize just how badly I'd wronged my best friend. I wrote "Landon" mainly as an apology to him, but also as a way to put all of that into words, to help myself work through it. I wanted to honor Landon's bravery in owning his own story by owning mine too.

Is it ever challenging to release music that is rather raw and personal?

It is, yeah. There are a few songs that are a little hard to sing, every time, no matter how many times I've played them. "Landon" is one. So is "Halley's Comet," a song about my parents' divorce. The thing is, though, that it's cathartic. And not just for me, but for other people. People need upbeat songs they can dance to, but they need sad songs too, hard songs. There's an irony in it. The songs that are the hardest and most painful to write seem to be the most healing. I play to pretty small rooms, but I can't tell you how many people have come up to me after shows to share their own "Landon" stories. I've got divorced friends who say "Halley's Comet" helped them understand their kids and connect with them. It's a great honor to get to be a part of something like that. It makes it all worth it.

What advice would you give to other aspiring female musicians and songwriters?

Just start. Take one step and then the next step. Be smart when you need to be; I mean, if you can't afford to quit your day job, then keep on waiting tables and start by playing on the weekends. Make smart moves and take calculated risks when you can, but don't let anybody tell you "no." Every "no" makes you tougher and gets you closer to a "yes." Know that your voice matters and that there's nothing you can't do if you put your mind to it. It will be hard as hell. But if you can't help yourself, if this is what you were born to do and you just can't imagine yourself doing anything else, then keep at it.

There are going to be days it's difficult to believe in your own worth. Don't listen to the naysayers, even if they're in your own head. Listen to great songwriters and players instead; there's no better way to learn the ropes and keep the faith. Write songs. Learn instruments. Play shows. Try not to develop a drinking habit. Keep going.

For custom guitars and repairs, **Erlewine Guitars** has been a favorite for many in Austin since 1969. Owner/operator **Mark Erlewine** is a player himself, as well as a master luthier and guitar designer, who apprenticed with his cousin (the "other" Erlewine, Dan). A codesigner of the Chiquita Travel Guitar with the legendary Billy Gibbons, he's also the creator of the Automatic and the headless Lazer, two guitars still in demand. He's evolved his guitar repair expertise for over twenty years, working on priceless guitars and for the biggest names.

ASK ALEXX

Dear Alexx,
When it comes to the writing process of any song, record, etc., what do you find the most difficult part, and what is the most rewarding?
~ Brandon Stebbins

Dear Brandon,

Hey, Brandon! I've found that the most difficult parts can vary, as there are a *lot* of elements involved in a song. For example, there are lyrics, melody, instrumentation, and production.

Sometimes a song will come easily, and everything falls into place. Other times, however, I'll have difficulty putting words to a melody, or finding a melody that works with my words.

Producing a song can also be tough. You can have a great song, but maybe you're not sure about which instrumentation to use, which direction to take it, or where to add or subtract harmonies, counter melodies, etc. Sometimes you'll throw the kitchen sink at production only to find that it's just not working.

The bottom line is, the inspiration isn't always there, and you can't force creativity. If I find that I'm struggling with a certain part, I'll come back to it, or work on another part of the song.

The most rewarding parts also vary for me, but one of my favorites has to be *writing* the song. I absolutely love the initial process of sitting alone with my acoustic guitar and coming up with a melody, lyrics, and chords. There's a certain magic that happens when you first write a song, and it's hard to replicate that same energy or performance again sometimes when you go to record the final version of it. The universe opens up to you for a brief period of time, and you just have to take what it gives to you. It may not always be a great offering, but the good part is, you can always revisit a song and make it better.

Ultimately, I think you just need to enjoy the journey of putting together a song or record and accept that even the most difficult parts are what make the process itself all the more rewarding.

~Alexx

Photo by Anabel DFlux

Have a question for Alexx?
She has an answer! Email info@guitargirlmag.com.

GIG GALLERY

Our Summer 2020 issue is all about Austin, and we had planned to showcase SXSW 2020 in our Gig Gallery. With its cancellation, we decided to go "back in time" and share a small sampling of the many photos taken by Kirk Stauffer at SXSW throughout the years 2010-2019.

Basia Bulat – SXSW 2010

Kate Voegele – SXSW 2010

Kyler England – SXSW 2010

Brooke Frazer – SXSW 2011

Jenn Grant – SXSW 2011

Jessica Lea Mayfield – SXSW 2011

Kina Grannis – SXSW 2011

Callaghan – SXSW 2012

Nikki Lane – SXSW 2012

Norah Jones – SXSW 2012

Sahara Smith – SXSW 2012

Lianne La Havas – SXSW 2013

Lissie – SXSW 2013

Lucy Rose – SXSW 2013

Bonzie – SXSW 2014

St. Vincent – SXSW 2014

Tori Kelly – SXSW 2014

Zella Day – SXSW 2014

Angel Olsen – SXSW 2015

Courtney Barnett – SXSW 2015

Natalie Prass – SXSW 2015

Kristin Diable – SXSW 2015

Billie Marten – SXSW 2016

Maren Morris – SXSW 2016

Whitney Rose – SXSW 2016

Ariel Abshire – SXSW 2017

Bridgit Mendler – SXSW 2017

Maggie Rogers – SXSW 2017

Remsy – SXSW 2017

Amy Shark – SXSW 2018

Elise Trouw – SXSW 2018

Jade Bird – SXSW 2018

Lera Lynn – SXSW 2018

Yola – SXSW 2019

CHAI – SXSW 2019

Leyla McCalla – SXSW 2019

Martin Guitar SC-13E Acoustic-Electric Guitar

By Lynnay Della Lucé

If you like playing leads on acoustics, you might enjoy Martin Guitar's new SC-13E acoustic-electric. Picture having easy access to scales all the way up to the seventeenth fret. By getting rid of part of the heel (that hump where the neck meets the body), it is now more accessible to reach more frets, therefore, opening up more playing possibilities with ease and comfort.

This guitar comes with a slightly new shape. The design contours to the body and balances nicely on a strap. It's very lightweight, and after standing for an hour straight while playing, it didn't hurt my back or make me feel strained. Sometimes I find myself pulling on the neck a little, and the strap puts weight on my shoulder. I normally don't realize it until the end of the gig. I didn't have that issue with the SC-13E. It just sits in the right spot. Also, the projection seems to be more enhanced with the new body style.

Nice low action, the cutaway heel, and the tapered neck make it easy to glide along the fretboard. I do a lot of live acoustic looping and love the fact that I can get so far up the frets, especially since there are leads that I'm used to doing on electric guitar. So many times, I've found myself awkwardly trying to hit that fifteenth or seventeenth fret during solos—now I can reach them without any problem.

It looks sleek, plays smoothly, sounds fantastic, and has a fast neck. Whether it's plugged in or raw, it has that beautiful, signature Martin sound. If you're looking for an acoustic that plays like an electric, this just may be the winner.

MSRP $1,899.00
Street $1,499.00
For more information and full specs, visit MartinGuitar.com.

Fender Fullerton Jazzmaster Ukulele

By Steve McKinley

Fender has created a gem with the Fullerton Jazzmaster Ukulele, introduced at Winter NAMM 2020 as part of their Fullerton ukulele series, with the body styles of the Telecaster, Stratocaster, and the Jazzmaster guitars.

Featuring the undeniable body shape; four vintage Kluson style in-line tuners on a painted headstock; a Fender-designed preamp with volume and tone controls; built-in tuner; no-tie bridge, and nickel hardware, the Jazzmaster ukulele comes in an Olympic White or Tidepool finish.

I point out the no-tie bridge, as it makes for easy string changes. This is a big deal because, with traditional uke bridges, you have to knot the string ends when you put on a new set, which can be a challenge when it's five minutes to showtime.

As an American vintage guitar enthusiast, with the Fullerton Jazzmaster Ukulele, it was love at first sight. Playing "Kashmir," "Ode to Joy," "Frosty the Snowman," and "Freebird" never sounded so cool and funny at the same time.

The Fender Fullerton Jazzmaster Ukulele is a well-designed instrument, blending tradition with innovation and flair. Its near-weightlessness, ease of play, and modern features free your creativity to wherever you want to go. It's my favorite new instrument of the year.

Price: $199.99
For more information and full specs, visit fender.com.

WristGrips

By Vanessa Izabella

A lot of musicians develop some type of repetitive stress injury throughout their careers. According to the company, WristGrips' compression wraps are designed to help stabilize and support your wrist during practice and performance. In a musician's market, such a product needs to be comfortable, stylish, and effective.

The purpose of WristGrips is to alleviate repetitive stress injury pains, prevent injury, and increase endurance and comfort while playing. I have been playing for many years, and I am no stranger to repetitive stress injuries, so I was curious to test out the product. I wore it while doing my daily guitar practice session, and I did notice a comfort from the wrist support that these provided. I also have very small wrists, and this "one size fits all" model worked perfectly for me (they provide plenty of room for those with large wrists as well). I have injured my wrists carrying gear to and from performances, and I know that this will give me plenty of wrist support for those occasions.

The wraps are black and not very bulky. I think they would blend well with other wrist jewelry, or can be worn alone for live performances. These wraps are not only for guitarists but for any musician that could use some extra support or needs compression to help an injury. They have a "Play longer pain-free for 90 days or your money back" guarantee, so there is no risk in trying out this product.

Price: $22.99 for two
For more information and to purchase, visit WristGrips.

Luna Safari Koa Supreme

By Steve McKinley

In 2020, Luna Guitars announced the release of their **Luna Safari Koa Supreme**, an acoustic-electric travel guitar. Being three-quarter size, it's one of the smallest of their lineup of acoustic guitars.

The size gives you the easy portability, but the girth is close to a parlor sized acoustic's. The solid Koa top and laminate Koa sides make for a resonant sonic chamber, producing an organic, clear, and full tone. A solid mahogany nineteen fret, C-shaped neck (15" radius), and Pau Ferro wood fingerboard create a well-balanced and smooth playing experience.

The abalone soundhole rosette and Pearloid moon phase inlays are typical of the Luna aesthetic. The bone 1.6875" nut and bridge hold D'Addario .012-.053 strings, and the open-gear tuning machines turn easily, yet hold firm. A satin finish and single-ply black binding add the finishing touches.

The Safari Koa Supreme has distinct tonal traits when using a microphone on it versus plugging into the Fishman Sonitone preamp, which is great. The volume and tone controls are located inside the soundhole.

Easy to fret and eager to please, I found this instrument a joy to play. A challenge for travel guitars is that they're forever compared to their larger siblings, but the Safari Koa Supreme sounded full, resonant, and clear. As an added extra bonus, for those "fly gigs," it fits nicely in an airplane overhead bin, and a durable gig bag is included.

Price: $329.00
For full specifications and more information, visit lunaguitars.com.

NEXI BASS Fuzz Pedal

By Amy Epperley

If you are looking for a great sounding bass fuzz with no fuss, then the NEXI BASS Fuzz pedal is a great one to check out. The BASS Fuzz is the next in a strong lineup of Hybrid NEXI analog pedals with a focus on creating vintage analog sound without compromise. While it fits nicely into the NEXI BASS pedalboard system, it can also be used as a stand-alone pedal within the conventional 9v battery or external power supply pedalboard setup.

This highly durable true-bypass analog bass effects pedal delivers that quintessential solid big bass fuzz with plenty of extras. It's not fussy about where you put it in your chain, allowing for plenty of versatility and convenience.

When trying it out, I loved being able to dial in great-sounding multiple fuzz tone possibilities all within one pedal, which makes this a definite winner for me. Placing it on a moderate setting, you get a very spacious but robust classic fuzz tone that can take you anywhere in experimenting with different effects. While lowering the gain and upping the tone and volume knobs, you can quickly dig into a more aggressive crunchy fat distortion fuzz. There was no tone, bass, or volume degradation—that I loved—and I soon found myself lost in a monstrous riff songwriting session.

Other advances include a splash waterproof design, which is great for all those times liquid has spilled on stage. The large round foot activation button allows engagement, and it features simple intuitive and responsive control knobs (Gain, Tone Blend, Volume). The brightly lit surround control face makes it super easy to see on a dark stage. Built like a tank, it was designed in the Netherlands and has a sleek, modern style.

For those who are not familiar with the NEXI BASS pedalboard, it is a powered "complete circuit slot" style pedalboard with an onboard tuner that forgoes the need for conventional patch cables, assorted power cords or daisy chains, or additional sticky fasteners. You can quickly and easily add, move, or change out your NEXI pedals or use the ConNEXI adapter that lets you incorporate non-NEXI pedals. By simply clicking them into a slot on the board, you can create a seamless chain within seconds, allowing the player to play and use the pedal effect immediately.

It's right on the money and a great sounding pedal delivering everything you would want or need in a good fuzz tone with plenty more. So if you are looking for a solid, dependable, great-sounding, tough built, versatile fuzz in your tone journey, then you'll be quite happy fuzzing out with this one.

Its right on the money and a great sounding pedal, delivering basically everything you'd want or ever need in a good Fuzz tone with plenty more. If you already have The Plug and Play Solution Pedalboard then there's no question, this is a definite must-have staple in your lineup and if you are looking for a solid, dependable, great-sounding, built tough, versatile fuzz in your tone journey then you'll be quite happy fuzzing out with this one.

Price for NEXI BASS Fuzz Pedal: $115.00
For more information and specifications, visit nexi-industries.com.

Paul Reed Smith SE P20E Acoustic-Electric Guitar

By Alex Windsor

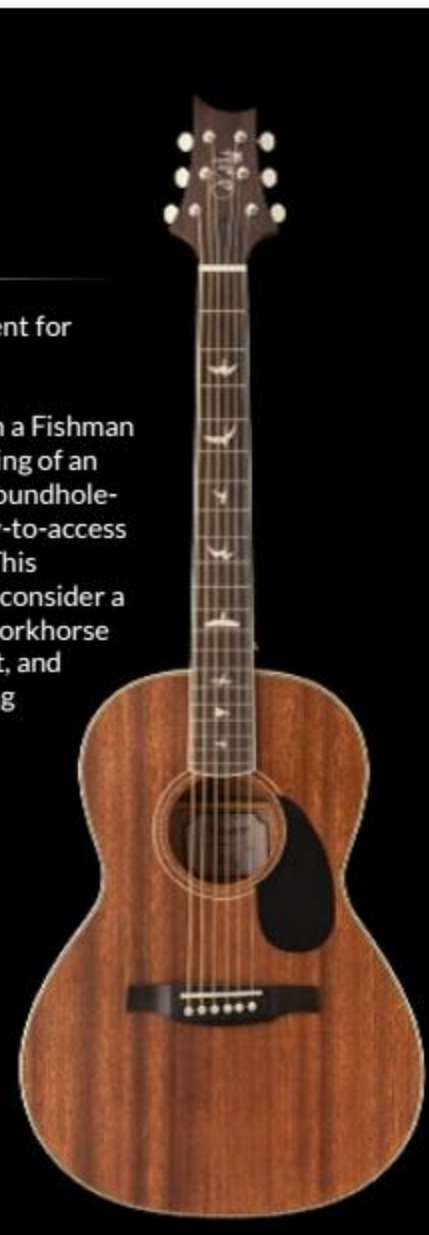
Since 1985, Paul Reed Smith Guitars (PRS) has been widely recognized as one of the world's premier guitar and amp manufacturers. After decades of focusing on electric guitar craftsmanship, PRS entered the acoustic realm by expanding its more affordable SE series. After receiving positive reviews for these acoustics, PRS now presents their first smaller sized parlor guitars: SE Tonare Parlor Acoustics.

Today, we're reviewing the PRS SE P20E model. Don't be fooled by its size—this guitar packs a huge punch. An all-mahogany construction provides a warm, mellow voice, and the PRS hybrid "X"/Classical bracing allows the top to freely vibrate, projecting a bold, even tone. The comfortable and compact body shape enhances the midrange and makes it a perfect instrument for fingerpicking.

The SE P20E is stocked with a Fishman GT1 pickup system, consisting of an undersaddle pickup and a soundhole-mounted preamp, with easy-to-access volume and tone controls. This transforms what some may consider a "couch-only guitar" into a workhorse stage and studio instrument, and the parlor size makes playing for hours effortless and comfortable.

Available in three satin finishes with herringbone rosettes and accents, PRS SE Parlor acoustics look as good as they sound.

Price: $579.00
For more information and full specs, visit PRSGuitars.com.



Rombo Picks

By Vanessa Izabella

Choosing the right guitar pick is a very important and personal choice. Picks are what connect us to the instrument, and different materials, thickness, and shape can change our tone and attack while playing.

The German-designed and engineered Rombo Picks have come up with a very innovative and eco-friendly set of picks. They decided to "go back to design basics," and after months of physical studies, they came up with four unique designs. Focusing on four parameters: flexibility, attack, technique, and tone, they have adapted those essential properties to create their unique picks.

These picks contain micro-patterns that fit in between your fingerprint grooves, creating a comfortable and ergonomic grip. With four different designs and thickness levels, there is something in their line to suit almost every player and playing style. Also, they have found a great way to use recycled materials: in their ECO-Black line, the picks are made from one hundred percent recycled material from pre-consumer fiber waste. The other pick line is made from thermoplastic polymer.

I enjoyed trying out these guitar picks. They are very stylish, and I feel Rombo has succeeded with their goal of creating a comfortable pick. They provided a clear tone with bass, and they were versatile, durable, and good looking. I liked them all but felt a great connection with the Diamond and the Classic for my personal playing style. I also tried out the ECO-BLACK set. I use a certain style of pick for playing electric guitar (I preferred the Diamond for that), and I loved the Classic for my acoustic playing.

I got great tones while being able to handle the picks comfortably in my hand. I also enjoyed the Rombo waves and Origami for electric and acoustic playing. I felt those two were very versatile for playing either guitar.

I think they have a great product here, and they are worth trying out. Visit their website for more information, and to explore options for purchasing these uniquely engineered picks.

Price: $10.00 for a "try out mix" (four picks)
For more information and specifications, visit rombopicks.com

MUSIC RELEASES

Heidi Newfield
The Barfly Sessions
June 5, 2020

SOKO
Feel Feelings
June 12, 2020

Teghan Devon
Little Lion
June 12, 2020

Larkin Poe
SELF MADE MAN
June 12, 2020

Kree Harrison
Chosen Family Tree
June 12, 2020

Norah Jones
Pick Me Up Off The Floor
June 12, 2020

Jenny Reynolds
Any Kind of Angel
June 19, 2020

Phoebe Bridgers
Punisher
June 19, 2020

Wildfire
Lauren Calve
June 25, 2020

MUSIC RELEASES

Haim
Women in Music Pt III
June 26, 2020

Emily Duff
Born on the Ground
June 26, 2020

Dossey
"Someone To Love"
July 3, 2020

Seela
Cool
July 24, 2020

The Frisbys
My Wicked Mind
June 26, 2020

Tenille Towns
The Lemonade Stand
June 26, 2020

Marchelle Bradanini
Only A Woman
July 3, 2020

A Small Death
Samantha Crain
July 17, 2020

Ellie Goulding
Brightest Blue
July 17, 2020

The Pretenders
Hate for Sale
July 17, 2020

Kathleen Edwards
Total Freedom
August 14, 2020

Brontë Fall
Finishing School
August 17, 2020

Zella Day
Where Does the Devil Hide
August 28, 2020

?
TO BE RELEASED SOON

Lana Del Rey
Chemtrails Over The Country Club
September 5, 2020

Alanis Morissette
Such Pretty Forks in the Road
September 18, 2020

Jadu Heart
Hyper Romance
September 25, 2020

TEXAS BLUES BASICS

By Leigh Fuge

Austin, TX, is a hotbed for music. All the mojo and vibe of this city resonates through some of its famed residents. Over the years, it has been home to many amazing artists, and some of its homegrown talent have made waves in the blues scene.

Modern-day blues hero Gary Clark Jr. hails from Austin, while Jimmy Vaughan (older brother of Stevie Ray), though born in Dallas, based himself out of Austin. The Canadian blues guitarist Sue Foley is also an Austin resident. Texas was, and still is, a fantastic place to be if you love the blues.

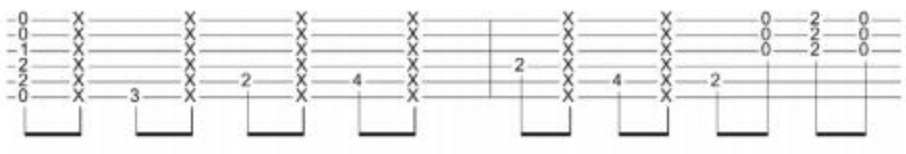
In this lesson, we're going to look at some Texas blues and get into that southern groove.

Before we get started, let's talk about the rhythm that we need to keep in mind here. Texas blues is heavily associated with a triplet feel shuffle. Though some of these examples may appear to be written as eighth notes, you play them with a triplet feel.

1 & a 2 & a 3 & a 4 & a*

Most of the notes fall on the beat and on the "a." Where the notation shows a triplet, it's played as three notes per beat. Where it shows eighth notes, it's two notes per beat played with a triplet feel.

Example 1

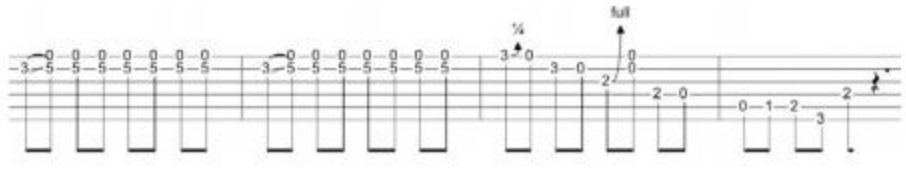


This is a typical Stevie Ray Vaughan-style rhythm part. It covers two bars of your typical twelve-bar progression. This example is in the key of E, but it can be transposed anywhere you wish if you use a capo.

You'll notice a muted strike between each note: these happen on the "a" of the triplet feel and are best played on the up stroke.

(* Editor's note: Method books commonly count triplets as "1-trip-let, 2-triplet, 3-trip-let, 4-triplet." Reason: to avoid confusion with the combination of one eighth and two sixteenth notes, which is counted as "1-&-a." But saying the word "triplet" can feel clunky, especially in faster tempos, so musicians tend to count triplets in a lot of different ways.)

Example 2

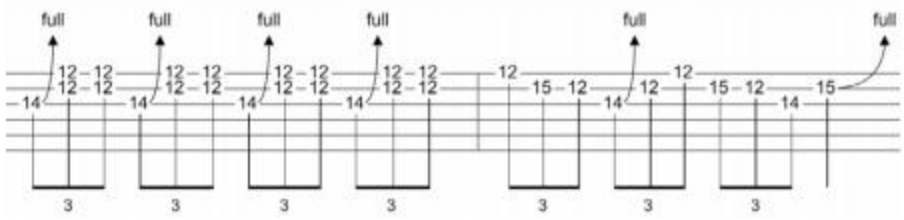


The triplet feel can even cross over into the lead guitar world. This lead line is a high energy line that is quite simple to get to grips with once you get the rhythmic feel under your hands.

The first two bars are identical, play these with a triplet feel. The slide from the third to the fifth fret on the B string takes place on the first beat.

The second half of the lick is played with exactly the same feel, except you're moving backward down the E minor pentatonic scale with some string bends slotted in at the start of the first and third beats.

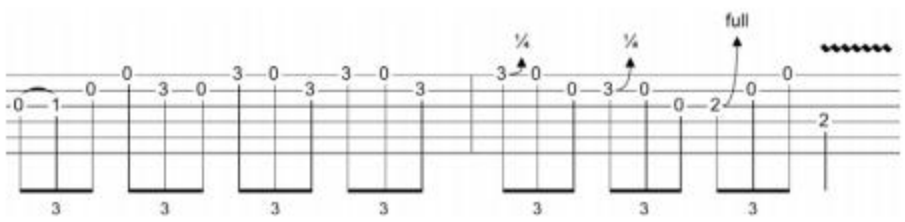
Example 3



Each beat across this entire example contains three notes per beat. You're still following the triplet feel, but now you're playing every single note across the triplet.

The opening bar is one triplet lick repeated on each beat. To play this, barre the E and B strings at the twelfth fret with your index finger. Use your ring finger to perform the bend on the G string. Don't forget to support the bend with your middle finger.

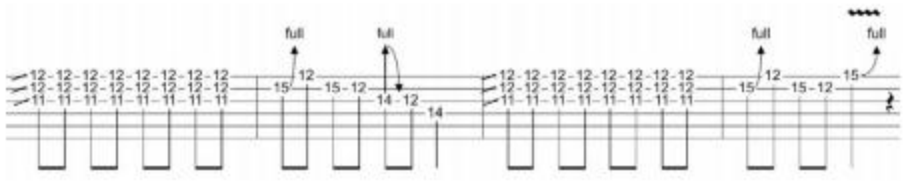
Example 4



More triplets here in this open string-heavy lick: this follows the E minor pentatonic in the open position, with the additional first fret on the G string added.

In the descending run in the second bar, you'll notice that the pattern between the first and second triplets is identical, except that you move to the next pair of strings. The quarter tone bends at the start of these are just a little pitch alteration to add a vocal quality to the run.

Example 5



Many Texas blues players add chordal parts to their lead lines for interesting effect. This lick contains an inversion of an Esus2 chord (made up of an E, B, and F#,) which is played in bars one and three with the same triplet feel.

The bars between these chords feature short minor pentatonic licks. This is a great way to play a lead line with rhythmic elements, especially in a one guitar player band setup, where no second player is handling the rhythm part.

ALL ABOUT ARPEGGIOS

By Alex Windsor

Need a new warm-up routine? Looking to expand beyond major scales? Then it's time to dip your toes into the wonderful world of arpeggios! An arpeggio consists of the notes of a chord played in succession, either ascending (up) or descending (down).

Like chords, arpeggios are made up of the root, third, and fifth intervals of the scale, and they can be major, minor, or include sevenths. For example, a major seventh arpeggio in the key of C would be C – E – G – B (root – third – fifth – seventh.)

Why should we practice arpeggios? It adds more color to our musical palette, instead of always thinking of melodies as being linear or diatonic. At the end of this lesson, you'll be able to play C minor seventh arpeggios in four positions on the fretboard.

Step 1: Ascending in Root Position
First, we'll begin the arpeggio by placing our first finger on the note C (third fret of the A string). Next, we will use our fourth finger (pinky) to play the third, which is the note E flat (sixth fret of the A string). From there, we will move to the fifth, which is the note G (fifth fret of the D string). Finally, we'll add the seventh, which is the note B flat (third fret of the G string). These notes make up the C minor seven (Cm7) arpeggio: C – Eb – G – Bb. See **Example A.**

Example A:

```
E|--------------
B|--------------
G|-----------3--
D|--------5-----
A|--3--6--------
E|--------------
```

Step 2: Descending in Root Position
Now that we've played the notes in ascending order, let's play them back down in descending order to complete the exercise. To do this, we must start on octave C (fifth fret of the G string) and play those same notes backward: B flat (third fret), G (fifth fret D string), and E flat (sixth fret A string). See **Example B**.

Example B

```
E|--------------
B|--------------
G|--5--3--------
D|--------5-----
A|-----------6--
E|--------------
```

Now try playing the whole thing starting with the root C on the A string, up to the octave C, and back down. Since there are four notes in each direction, each note should receive one beat. See **Example C**.

Example C:

```
E|------------------------
B|------------------------
G|----------3--5--3--------
D|--------5----------5-----
A|--3--6----------------6--
E|------------------------
```

Step 3: Starting on the Third
Once you 're able to play the notes of the Cm7 arpeggio comfortably and evenly, it's time to move up the neck and play the same pattern starting on the third note of the arpeggio. This is also known as first inversion. We'll need to move our entire hand down so that the second finger is now placed on the third note, which is E flat (sixth fret of the A string). At this point, it's important to remember that we're in the key of C minor, so we must continue to use the same four notes. With this in mind, the next note would be G (fifth fret D string). We'll use our first finger to reach up to that note. We will then use our fourth finger to reach the note B flat that we now must play on the eighth fret of the D string. Finally, we'll reach up to the note C on the fifth fret of the G string. Play these notes back down, starting on the octave E flat (eighth fret G string). **See Example D**.

Example D:

```
E|------------------------
B|------------------------
G|----------5--8--5--------
D|-----5--8----------8--5--
A|--6---------------------
E|------------------------
```

Step 4: Starting on the Fifth
As you can probably guess, the next step is to move down the fretboard again to start the pattern on the fifth note of the arpeggio, which is the note G. This is called second inversion. We'll begin by placing our first finger on the note G (tenth fret of the A string) and play the same four notes again: G, B flat (thirteenth fret A string), C (tenth fret D string), E flat (thirteenth fret D string). Play the notes back down, starting on the octave G (twelfth fret G string). See **Example E**.

Example E:

```
E|-----------------------------
B|-----------------------------
G|----------------12-----------
D|----------10--13------13--10------
A|--10--13---------------------13--
E|-----------------------------
```

Step 5: Starting on the Seventh
The final position, known as third inversion, begins on the seventh note of the arpeggio, which is B flat (thirteenth fret A string). Start with the second finger and play the four notes once more: B flat, C (fifteenth fret A string), E flat (thirteenth fret D string), G (twelfth fret G string), and back down again starting on the higher B flat (fifteenth fret G string). See **Example F**.

Example F:

```
E|-----------------------------
B|-----------------------------
G|-------------12--15--12----------
D|----------13-------------13------
A|--13--15---------------------15--
E|-----------------------------
```

Step 6: Put It All Together
Once you feel comfortable with all four positions, put the whole thing together by starting on the Root C and play in ascending and descending order all the way up the fretboard. See **Example G.** Now that you know the formula for arpeggios, you can transpose this same exercise into other keys!

Example G:

```
E|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------
B|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------
G|----------3--5--3----------------5--8--5----------------------12-------------------------12--15--12----------
D|--------5----------5--------5--8----------8--5----------10--13------13--10-------------13-------------13------
A|--3--6----------------6--6----------------------10--13----------------------13--13--15----------------------15--
E|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------
```

THE AUSTIN SOUND

STEVIE RAY VAUGHAN FOR THE SLIGHTLY INTIMIDATED

By Mandy Rowden

Stevie Ray Vaughan is, for most people, synonymous with Austin music, and for good reason. He is notably one of the greatest guitar players in history and is a veritable god in the world of modern blues-rock. Here in Austin, we feel proud to call him our own. Many a budding guitar player has aspired to duplicate his sound over the years, but let's be honest: his style and his tone can be really intimidating! Where do you begin if you want to enjoy playing the music of the guitar legend, but simply don't have the chops yet? Start where we all start: with the basics.

All blues songs borrow, to some extent, from a format known as the twelve-bar blues, which is a pattern every guitar player should understand. Stevie Ray Vaughan certainly deviated from this, but the bulk of his well-known tunes come from a version of this format, making it a great place to begin. Starting here, you can fairly easily nail down rhythm parts to songs like "Pride and Joy," "Texas Flood," "The Sky Is Crying," and "Look At Little Sister."

The twelve-bar (or twelve-measure) blues is made up of a basic structure that looks like this:

```
I
////|////|////|////|
IV          I
////|////|////|////|
V     IV    I     V
////|////|////|////|
```

The first thing to understand is that the Roman numerals correspond with chords built on the first, fourth, and fifth scale steps of the key you are in. In the case of "Look at Little Sister" and "Pride and Joy," which are both in the key of E♭, you look at the E♭ scale. Take the E♭ (I), A♭ (IV), and B♭ (V) chords and plug them in accordingly. The E♭ scale looks like this:

```
I   ii  iii  IV  V   vi  vii  I
E♭  F   G    A♭  B♭  C   D    E♭
```

To really get that bluesy color, it is common to make the V chord a V7, so feel free to play around with that option if your chord vocabulary allows it. Depending on the intensity level of the blues sound you're looking to achieve, you also have the option to turn the I and IV chords into seventh chords as well, which are pretty common characteristics in Stevie Ray Vaughan's songs. He was also liberal with the use of ninth chords, so beginning to learn those and adding them into the existing patterns will only increase your knowledge of the neck and get you one step closer to capturing his sound. You will also notice that there is some wiggle room on the timing of the V chord in the twelfth bar/measure, so listen, listen, listen, and adapt accordingly. Understanding song structures like the twelve-bar blues is a great starting point to understanding music, but you have to remember that your ears are very powerful tools. Hopefully, you're learning to trust them.

There's a common variation in twelve-bar blues called a "quick change," where the second measure goes to a IV, then back to the I on the third measure. Two great examples of this are in "Texas Flood" and "The Sky Is Crying," which are in the keys of F# and B respectively:

```
I     IV    I
////|////|////|////|
IV          I
////|////|////|////|
V     IV    I     V
////|////|////|////|
```

```
I   ii  iii  IV  V   vi  vii  I
F#  G#  A#   B   C#  D#  E#   F#
B   C#  D#   E   F#  G#  A#   B
```

By understanding these ideas, you are not only building a foundation for understanding how to play like the great Stevie Ray Vaughan, but you are also developing your ear and pinning down some of the fundamentals of music theory. These fundamentals will show up in everything you play and write from here on out. Don't forget, the bottom line to becoming a better guitar player is to play, play, play, so grab your axe, throw yourself into that Austin sound, and have a great time jamming with Stevie Ray!

MAP OUT YOUR GOALS

By Kathryn Cloward

> Since my mental map was so focused on manifesting my desires, I did achieve President's Club that summer and even overshot my goal by reaching Circle of Excellence, which also got me promoted.

When I was younger, I was a runner. I started running when I lived in Auckland, New Zealand, where I'd run through One Tree Hill—the place referenced in U2's iconic song. I also lived in a rural part of the North Island called Waipu, in a home reachable by a dirt road. My runs on that road helped me work through some unresolved musings of a twenty-something woman.

When I returned to San Diego, I kept running, but not as much, probably logging three miles per run. As my running enjoyment increased, I set a goal to run the Rock 'n' Roll Marathon. I knew I had a lot of training to do if I was going to complete 26.2 miles.

I had ten months to train. Since I'd never trained for a marathon before, I needed guidance. Some people encouraged me to join a running team for the group motivation and accountability. I knew I didn't need external accountability; I had that internally. I did know I needed a plan for how I was going to get from where I was to where I wanted to be. Thankfully, I found a training schedule was the right fit. This schedule was like a daily map that broke down the big goal into the basics of daily/weekly runs.

The focus on a daily goal to meet my long-term goal made sense to me. Instead of feeling overwhelmed by the large number of miles, I focused my attention on daily goals that felt realistic and appropriately built up my stamina.

And something else happened during this time. As I was so focused on daily running goals, I naturally made choices that supported achieving that goal outside of running. I ate healthier foods. I didn't drink alcohol much. My mental focus was aligned in all areas. If something externally didn't support my bigger goal, I was naturally repelled from it. This focused determination rippled throughout my life, especially with building my business career, which I was only about eight months into. Inspired by my boss's encouragement, I decided to set some important career goals, including achieving President's Club—which was pretty ambitious, since my sales numbers were super low. But I knew other people had achieved it and if they could do it, so could I.

With that big goal in mind, I used the map concept to create a plan. Instead of focusing on the big number of sales I'd need to achieve, I broke it down to the basic steps I'd need to take each day to reach my monthly goals. It wasn't a rigid plan. It was quite simple. But I had to do the work, just like training for the marathon.

By the time I was at the starting line of my first marathon, I'd built up a tremendous

amount of stamina. I finished it with ease. I was so proud of myself. It was a huge deal for me, and people I cared about were there to support me.

Since my mental map was so focused on manifesting my desires, I did achieve President's Club that summer and even overshot my goal by reaching Circle of Excellence, which also got me promoted. In fact, I had to leave my first company-wide manager's retreat in Palm Springs early to get back to San Diego to run the marathon. Talk about alignment.

All that took place twenty-one years ago. Why am I referencing it now, you might wonder? I share this story because that map concept for goal achievement is what I still use for everything I desire to manifest. I use this concept in my music career, and perhaps you will find it helpful for yours.

I released my first Kathryn Cloward original songs in 2015—after a lifetime of self-doubt and giving up. I knew I wanted to release an album to fulfill the desire of little girl me. But as of 2012, I was a long way from doing that; I hadn't written even one original song.

With that goal as my destination, I broke it down to the basics. I took voice and guitar lessons. I aligned with a talented songwriter friend to help me write the songs that would become my *Free to Fly* album. During that process, I learned and grew and overcame enormous challenges. And eventually, I did fulfill my goal of releasing twenty-two original songs, including my *A Soft Place to Fall* album, featuring eleven songs I wrote myself. None of my goal achievement was for anyone else's approval or validation. It was for my soul's fulfillment of finally feeling worthy enough to believe I could do it—for manifesting my truest desire.

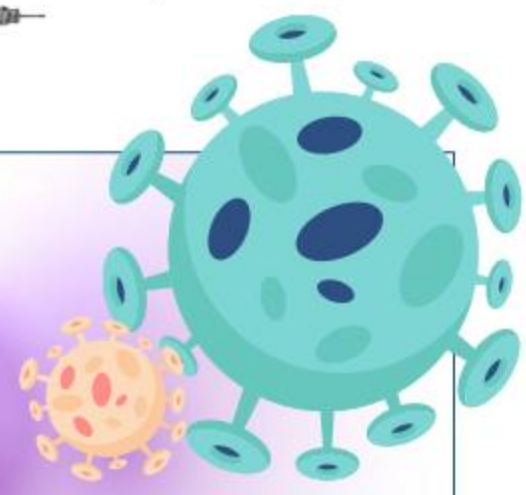
According to the Oxford dictionary, the word success is defined as the "accomplishment of an aim or purpose." I believe wholeheartedly that so many of us just need a little push in the YOU CAN DO IT direction to set a goal, and it can be achieved, step by step, day by day. And above all else, what you will become while on the road to manifesting your desires will be far more valuable than you can imagine.

MAP Out Your Goals

M = MINDSET and MANIFESTATION. These go hand-in-hand. Whether you believe you'll achieve your desired goal or whether you don't think it's possible—you are correct.

A = ATTRACTING, which requires ATTENTION. The Law of Attraction teaches us that what we think about, we bring about—positive or negative thoughts. Focus your attention on positive results, and you'll attract into your life what you need for goal achievement.

P = PURSUE with PURPOSE for PERSONAL fulfillment. No one else establishes your standard for success. That's all you! Believe in yourself and focus on the positive outcome you desire. You are worth it!



SAFETY PROTOCOLS FOR THE MUSIC INDUSTRY FOLLOWING COVID-19

As businesses begin to reopen after the shutdown from the COVID-19 pandemic, consumers are navigating how they will be conducting business and what protocol businesses are following to ensure their safety. When it comes to the music industry, this includes retail stores, lessons, rental equipment, recording studios, etc.

To assist, the CDC has issued directives for protocols to follow, ensuring safety and security to the public. The Producers & Engineers Wing of the Recording Academy has compiled a list of safety measures that can be found on their site. This list provides great information for studio owners, engineers, and musicians. The document is titled "Considerations for Recording Studios as they Reopen" and can be found at this link - https://www.grammy.com/sites/com/files/studio_guide_final_05282020.pdf

Also, the National Association of Music Merchants has issued their COVID-19 Instrument Cleaning guidelines which can be found at this link - https://www.namm.org/covid-19/articles/covid-19-and-instrument-cleaning

Contact your local music or lesson store before visiting for information on safety protocols.

Wash your hands! Stay safe!

GUITAR GABBY ON BEING A BOSS

"THIS IS MY JOURNEY."

By Guitar Gabby

Part one in a twelve-part series, where Guitar Gabby walks us through her journey of "Being a Boss," and shares insights and tips for other women to pursue their dream of becoming a boss.

During my first few months of starting The TxLips Band, LLC., I was unsure about a lot of things. I was learning how I wanted to execute this complicated business model. I was (and still am) learning about myself. I love hard, and I take care of people I ride for because that's who I am, that's how I was raised. I believe God has given me a vision and a calling, and it naturally came with aspirations, goals, and objectives, all of which I wanted to meet within a certain amount of time.

Photo by Rhythmic Images Photography

Initially, I was not sure how I was going to get there, but I knew I had to figure it out. I'm a natural-born hustler. I go for what I want, and I don't let up. If I was going to meet my hefty goals in less than five years, I had to get my big girl panties on and boss it up.

TxLips started off as a backing band (Gurl Code) for Diamond (former Crime Mob member.) I was asked to step in as a guitarist for a music video she was looking to shoot, and I saw an opportunity for something bigger. I saw an avenue that I could fill that wasn't currently being filled as well as it should have been.

I remembered the hell I went through being in my own skin in middle and high school, and even some of college. Black Women have strategically been left out of the conversation in the music industry, especially in rock 'n' roll. I thought back to the brave women such as Sister Rosetta Tharpe, who paved the way before me, and in that instance, I knew I was called to follow in those footsteps. After stepping up into the role of being Gurl Code's band manager, I realized this could be more, so I started The TxLips Band and immediately put us on a busy schedule of back-to-back rehearsals, shows, and then there was our touring schedule with Diamond.

As a result, my life quickly morphed into multiple full-time jobs of being a law student; running and developing this business; being the frontwoman; working in the world of non-profit; managing various artists in the Atlanta area (such as Chavis Flagg and Dara Carter), and touring. There were many nights I didn't sleep due to being on the computer to email venues; set up tours for my band and my clients; finish a legal briefing assignment, and coordinate eight to ten band schedules weeks in advance to set rehearsal dates. Someone had to do it, or it wouldn't get done.

Over the years, I learned what caring for myself would look like. I learned that you could give your all to people, and sometimes, it still isn't enough for them. I found that being a "boss" meant things won't always be easy, and they for sure won't be peaches and sunshine. Sometimes, you have to say "no," when you really want to say "yes." Sometimes you have to rub two nickels together to make a dollar and hope it's enough to get you and your band into a last-minute Airbnb in the middle of London (after you've already arrived in the city.)

Being an entrepreneur can be difficult at times, and it has a side effect of losing people you thought were friends, and accepting that you may never get them back. Many times, you will have to walk the journey alone, because you can't take everyone with you, but, almost always, in the end, you land on your feet, because you push through the mess and arrive at the light at the end of the tunnel.

This is the behind-the-scenes of being a boss. This is my journey.

Gabriella "Guitar Gabby" Logan is an Atlanta Native and proud graduate of Spelman College and Vermont Law School. Her background in environmental and music law fueled her desire to start and manage the international all-women touring collective, TxLips Band, LLC. Logan believes it is important for artists to be well rounded and versed in many areas of the music business, thus inspiring women worldwide to be an unstoppable force.

GUITAR GABBY ON BEING A BOSS

FIGHTING ON BEHALF OF WOMEN OF COLOR

Part two in a twelve-part series, where Guitar Gabby walks us through her journey of "Being a Boss," and shares insights and tips for other women to pursue their dream of becoming a boss.

I started my music journey at a young age. I learned about the ways of this world by trial and error, and by being a black woman in the nature of the music business and more. Many times, I was not one hundred percent sure of certain business moves or what direction to go in. I realized early on that the world was full of people that will and will not understand what I was building. There would be people who are willing to support, and those who are not willing at all.

Every time I was met with the demands of this industry, the most important person in my life brought me back to my center and reminded me of the woman she raised. My mother was, still is, and forever will be, my rock. She gave me the truth about how this world places women in parameters under a patriarchal society designed to limit our mindsets and scopes of what we can do and who we can be. I remember having open and honest conversations with my mom about how to deal with the things that are thrown my way every day. She would always inspire me and remind me to "straighten my crown" and keep going. I would leave these conversations feeling more and more empowered, and I knew I wanted to dedicate my life and career(s) to fight on behalf of women of color. I knew we have always needed more, and that wouldn't come about without pressure.

Change can be scary, though. Taking a stand for something can be hard to do, especially when it isn't clear if you will have support or not. It is hard to know if what you are creating will be accepted. It isn't easy to build something if you don't know what the responses will be from your community, peers, or the business side of the music industry. I remember going after my first major endorsement. Naturally, I wondered if these majority white male companies would understand what I am doing and understand the direct ask I brought to the table.

I didn't really see black women being shown on these companies' websites, advertisements, marketing strategies, or social media. I knew that if I was going to go all-in for endorsements and building from the ground up, I had to be ready for the flack and the hate that would come at the same rate as love and support. Learning how to navigate through that was a journey and still is each and every day. I learned the importance of knowing who you are, staying true to yourself, and standing in that, no matter what.

In 2017, I received my first endorsement from Ernie Ball. In the years to follow, I learned how to market my brand and pressed for direct visibility and the inclusion of black women. Next, I would pick up ESP Guitars, EMG Pickups, Empire Ears, Stacks FX, Steve Clayton Picks, and more. My goal was and still is to ensure that black women are included in these conversations, marketing of brands, and represented in all the ways we flourish.

It is a steep path but can be rewarding in the end. In light of the present times, I want to continue encouraging major companies, including my endorsers, to take a visible stand for justice. If you don't stand for something, you will fall for anything.

Stay true to you, and remember to straighten your crown, sis.

Gabriella "Guitar Gabby" Logan is an Atlanta Native and proud graduate of Spelman College and Vermont Law School. Her background in environmental and music law fueled her desire to start and manage the international all-women touring collective, TxLips Band, LLC. Logan believes it is important for artists to be well rounded and versed in many areas of the music business, thus inspiring women worldwide to be an unstoppable force.

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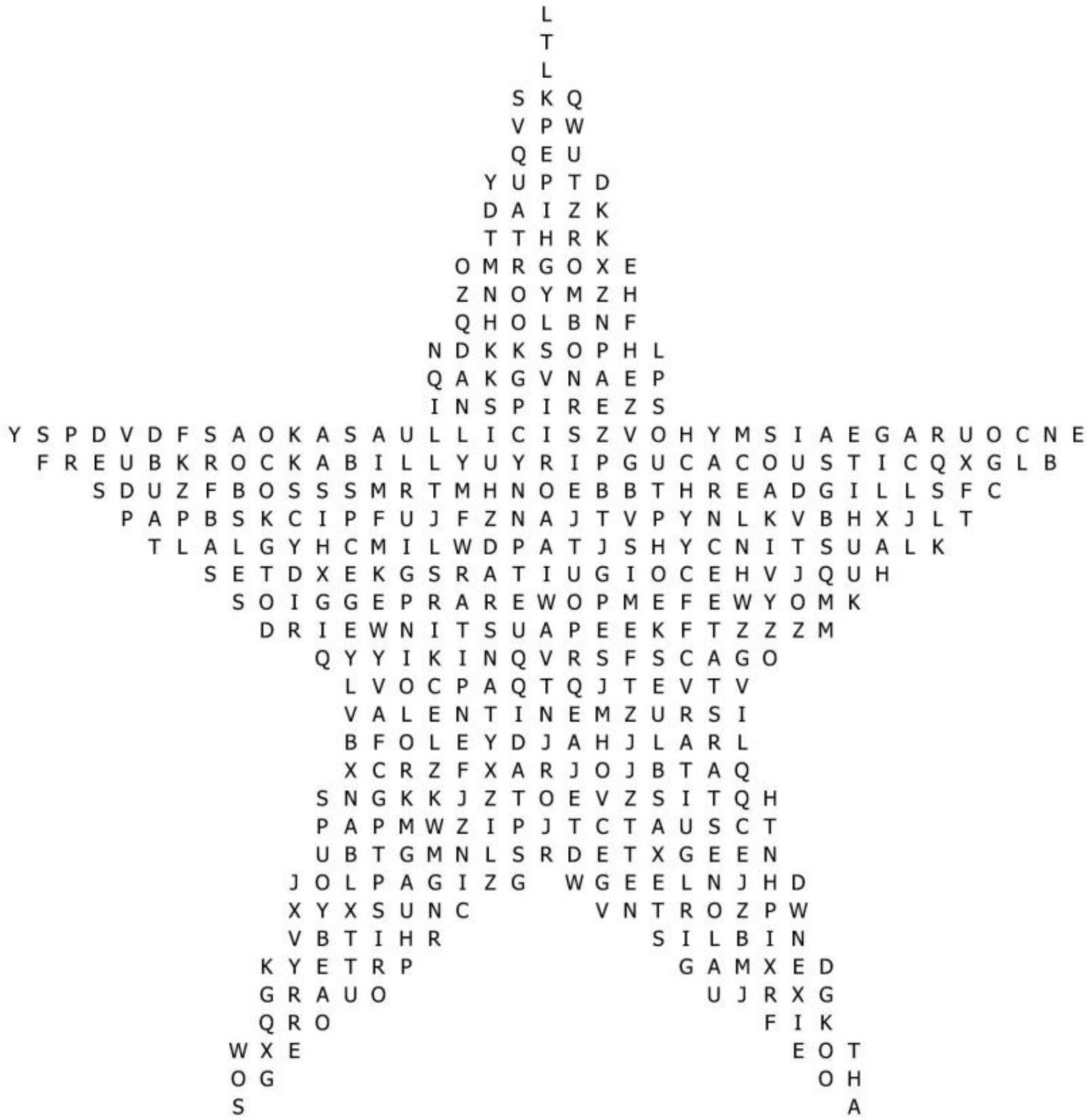
NICHOLE WAGNER

About Me:
I'm a songwriter in Austin, TX. I just released my sophomore EP, *Dance Songs for the Apocalypse*.

My Inspiration:
I grew up listening to (and still love) Stevie Nicks, Dolly Parton, Bonnie Raitt, Chrissie Hynde, Linda Ronstadt, Emmylou Harris, Nanci Griffith, and Jackson Browne. But I'm also super inspired by the music that Maggie Rogers, Yola, Phoebe Bridgers, War & Treaty, Birds of Chicago, and Brandi Carlile are putting out.

My Gear:
My main guitar is a '65 Gibson Country Western. It's got one of those super-skinny mid-'60s necks and feels amazing to play. It lives in a holographic glitter (!!) case from Calton here in Austin that makes me happy every time I see it, even though it weighs a ton. I dabble in electric on a Taos Turquoise Fender Strat and a sparkly, silver Epiphone Casino.

Photo provided by artist with permission to use.



WORD LIST

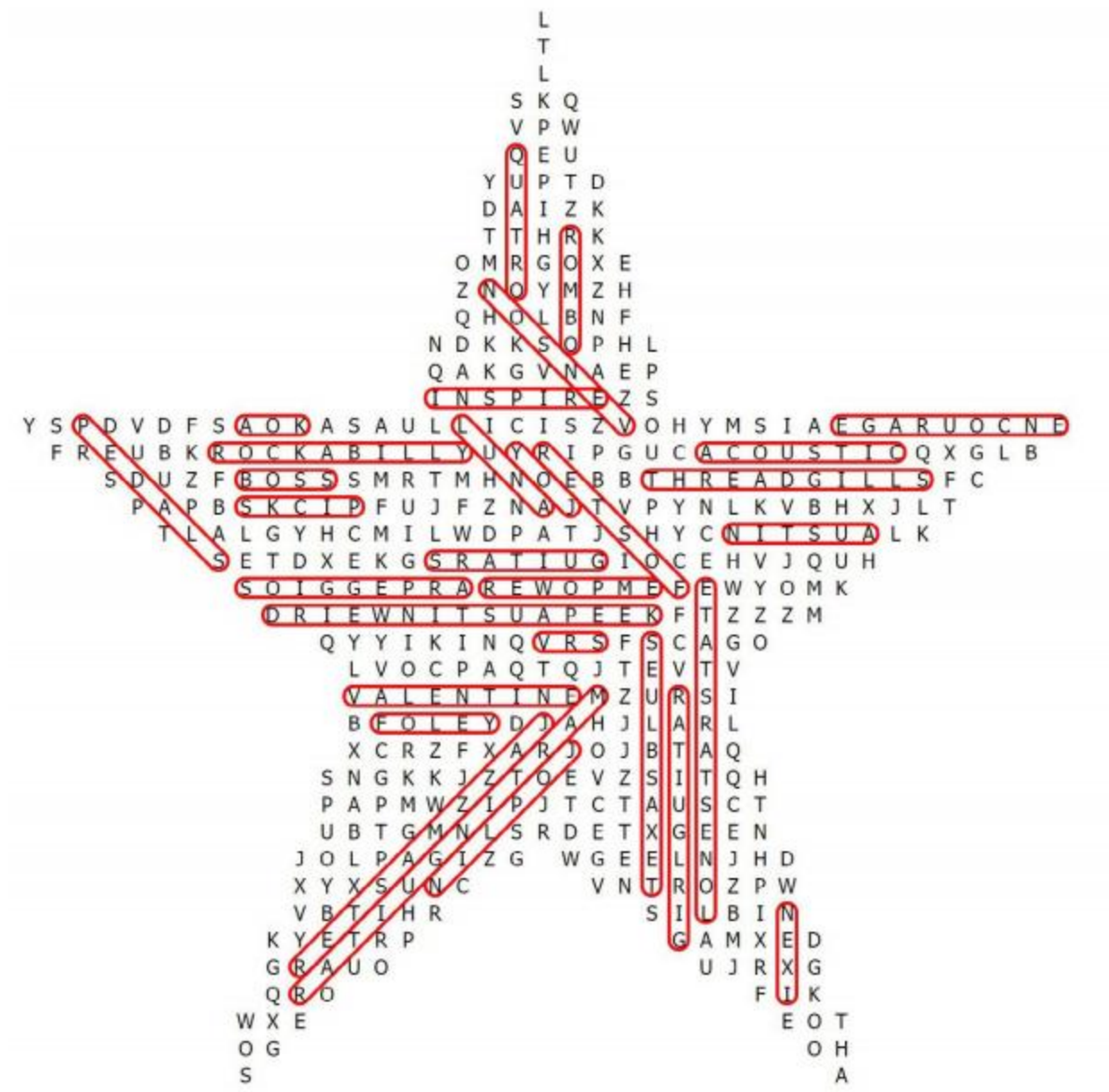
ACOUSTIC
ARPEGGIOS
AUSTIN
BOSS
EMPOWER
ENCOURAGE
FOLEY
FOSTER
GIRL GUITAR
GUITARS
INSPIRE
JAZZMASTER
JOPLIN
JOY
KEEP AUSTIN WEIRD
KOA
LONESTAR STATE
LUNA
MARTIN GUITAR
NEXI
PEDALS
PICKS
QUATRO
ROCKABILLY
ROMBO
SRV
TEXAS BLUES
THREADGILLS
VALENTINE
VENSON

TRIVIA

1. What day was declared Jackie Venson Day by Austin City Hall?
2. What wood is the Luna Safari made of?
3. Who is this edition's #GuitarGirl?
4. What Canadian blues artist calls Austin home?
5. When was *Austin City Limits* founded?
6. What Martin guitar was reviewed in this issue?
7. What is the name of Kathy Valentine's new book?
8. What is the name of Ruthie Foster's latest album?
9. Carla DeSantis Black was the editor of what magazine?
10. What guitar does Patti Quatro play?

Mind Game answers on page 67

KEEP
AUSTIN
WEIRD



Trivia Answers

1. May 21, 2014
2. Koa
3. Nichole Wagner
4. Sue Foley
5. 1974
6. SC-13E
7. *All I Ever Wanted: A Rock 'n' Roll Memoir*
8. *Live At The Paramount*
9. *Rockgrl*
10. 1953 Les Paul Gold Top

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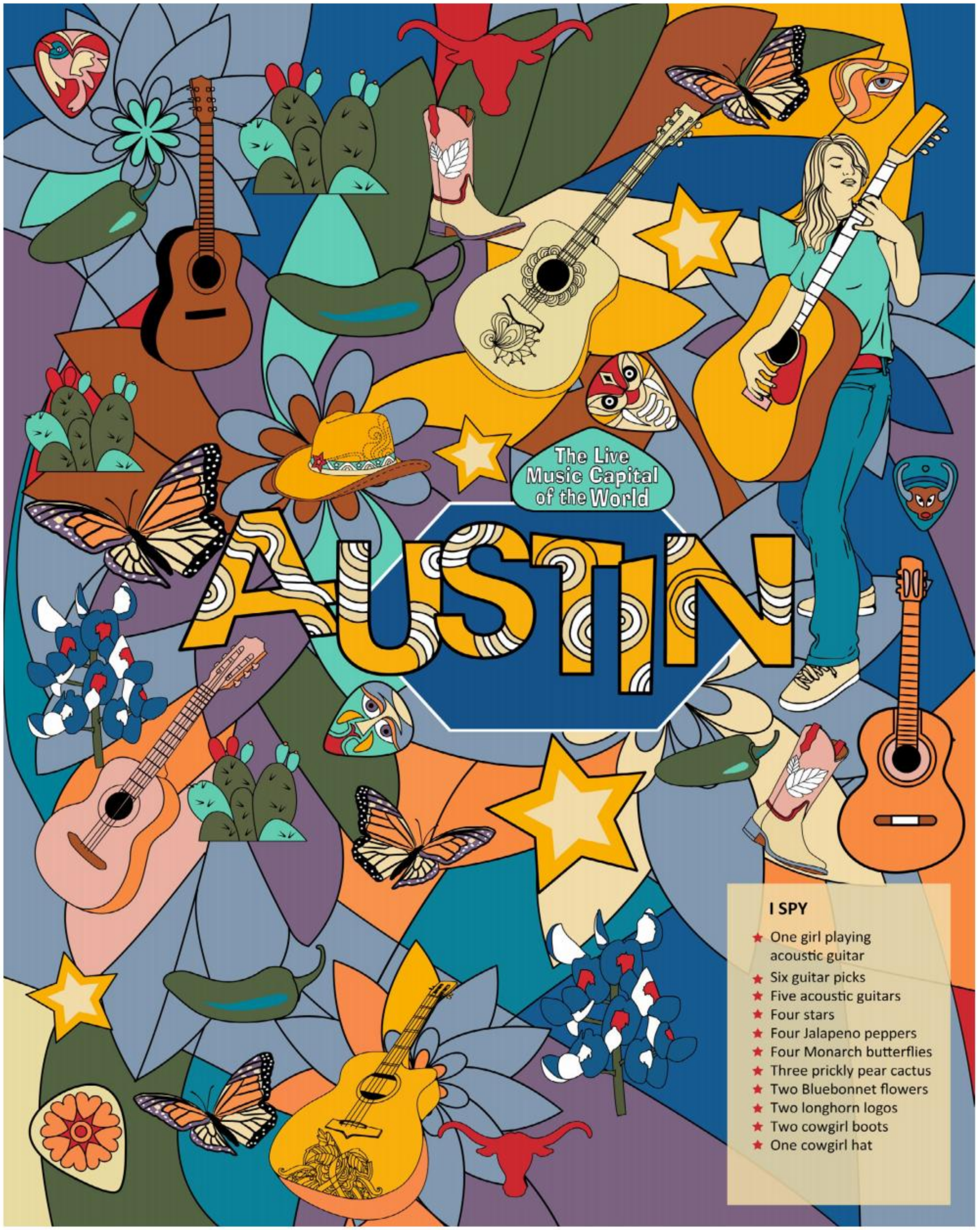
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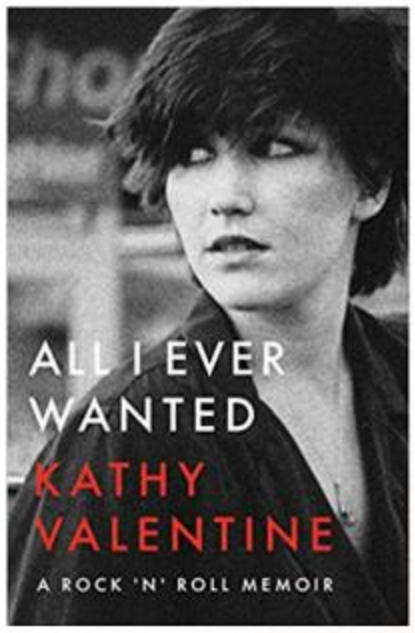
Six guitar picks
Five acoustic guitars
Four stars
Four Jalapeno peppers
Four Monarch butterflies
Three prickly pear cactus
Two Bluebonnet flowers
Two longhorn logos
Two cowgirl boots
One cowgirl hat

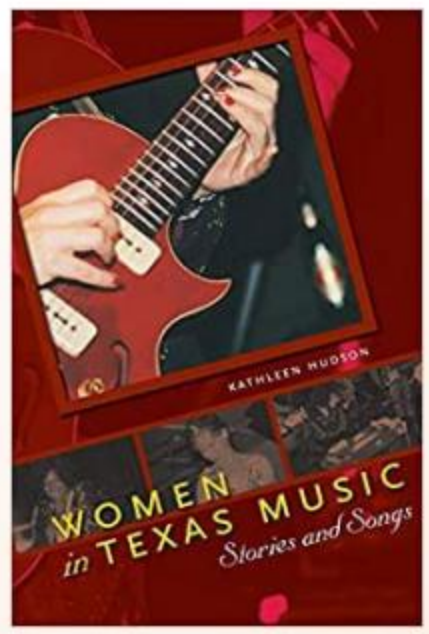
WHAT WE'RE READING NOW



All I Ever Wanted: A Rock 'n' Roll Memoir
Kathy Valentine
University of Texas Press
March 2020

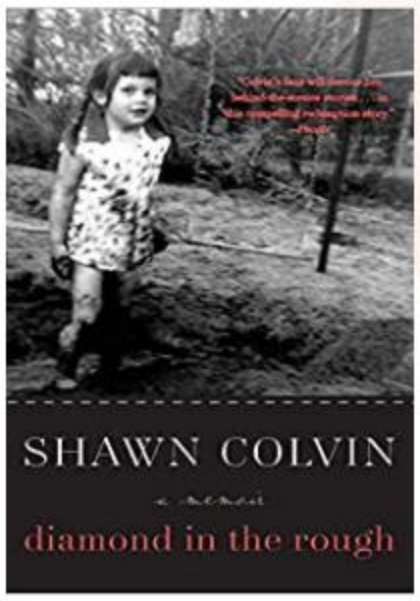
Kathy Valentine bears all in All I Ever Wanted: A Rock 'n' Roll Memoir: the good, the bad, and the ugly. From her early years growing up in Austin without her father and being raised by a single mother who had no rules or restrictions, Valentine had to fend for herself and found solace when she discovered the guitar.

Spending countless hours devoted to her guitar, she was driven to be in a band. Through drugs, sex, abortions, fame with the Go-Go's, and the subsequent break up, Valentine takes you through it all—the ups and downs, life with the Go-Go's, hitting a low point, and her come back.



Women in Texas Music
Kathleen Hudson
University of Texas Press
September 2007

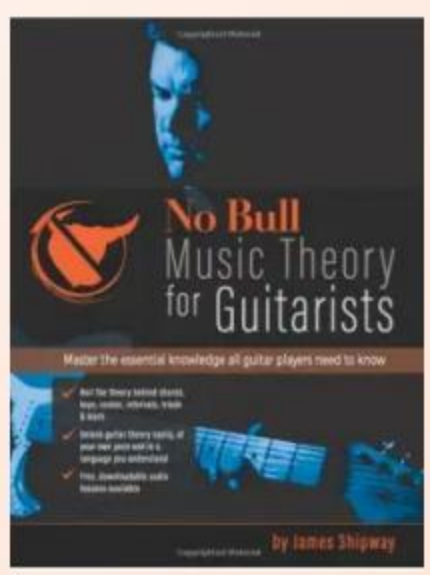
Again, not a new release, but a very insightful book on female musicians in Texas. Kathleen Hudson introduces us to these wonderful musicians with her candid conversations, several of which we featured in this edition—Rosie Flores, Ruthie Foster, and Terri Hendrix.



Diamond in the Rough: a Memoir
Shawn Colvin
William Morrow
Paperbacks
June 2012

While not a new release, we wanted to learn more about this Austin resident. Colvin's memoir begins with her life in rural South Dakota. A self-described tomboy, she recalls her fascination with fire, struggles with school, loneliness, depression, anxiety, and panic attacks. She started playing guitar at the age of ten.

Colvin details her life as a musician, battling alcoholism and panic attacks, her relationships, songwriting, and motherhood.



No Bull Music Theory for Guitarists
James Shipway
March 2019

For the guitarist that wants to learn music theory, James Shipway has put together a very detailed, easy to understand guideline with graphics and exercises to aide the guitarist that is seeking to learn music theory. Shipway describes this book as a crash course in music theory. Set out in twelve chapters, he describes in simple and concise language the topic, shows graphics to coincide, some exercises, and then a test. I told you it was easy! As Shipway says, "no bull."

FAN FAVORITES

Jackie Venson at the Jewel Box Theater in
Seattle, Washington on August 16, 2019
Photos by Kirk Stauffer

CONTRIBUTORS

Alexx Calise is an accomplished singer, guitarist, and songwriter. Perhaps best known for her hit song, "Cry," which became a staple on the show "Dance Moms" and boasts millions of hits on YouTube, Calise's raw emotion, heart-and soul-lyrics, and unmistakable vibrato have impacted thousands of young girls all over the world. Calise is currently working on new solo material and songs for licensing, and she recently released a new EP with other music project, Batfarm. In addition to her musical pursuits, she also works in public relations and marketing and owns her own party entertainment business. When not playing shows or writing music, she enjoys horror movies, exercising, or taking a well-deserved nap. alexxcalise.net

Kathryn Cloward is an award-winning book series author, performing songwriter, media publisher and producer, director, and serial entrepreneur. She's the founder and CEO of Kandon Unlimited, Inc., a heart-centered mindful media company intent on creating positive and empowering media for people of all ages. kathryncloward.com

Emmaria Cumiskey is a freelance copywriter based in Toronto, Canada. When she's not doing work for GuitarGirl, she writes all kinds of web content and dabbles in ghostwriting. If you're looking for her, she's probably in the nearest bookstore. Find her on Twitter at @CumiskeyCollect and Instagram at @emmariacumiskey.

Amy Epperley, aka The Platinum Viking, is an Atlanta-based classically trained multi-instrumentalist specializing in cello and electric bass guitar. She is currently a full-time musician that not only does studio session and recording work but also teaches music lessons and theory. She is involved with multiple projects and bands spanning everything from cover bands to tribute bands such as Siamese Dream (Smashing Pumpkins Tribute) and Evil Women (All Female Black Sabbath Tribute) to original bands Vices of Vanity, Sash the Bash, and Motorage. She has played with, been direct support to, and toured with several national and international recording artists and bands and will be releasing new material and on tour starting in 2019. Her recent project is Sonicsphere Podcast.

Leigh Fuge is a professional guitarist and tutor from the UK He works as a session guitarist, plays with several live bands, writes for various high-profile guitar publications, and works daily with his own music students to develop their skills and careers. He is passionate about sharing knowledge and helping aspiring players hit their potential with technical and songwriting abilities. leighfugeguitar.com

Guitar Gabby is a twenty-sox-year-old guitarist born and raised between Atlanta, GA, and Washington, DC. With playing for over twelve years and working with many artists over the years, she started her own band which she currently manages and plays in. The Txlips Band is an all-Black Woman rock band hailing from Atlanta. Initially coming together to play for a prominent rapper named Diamond (former Crime Mob member), The Txlips Band has expanded and grown over the past three years to represent diversity in the music industry. Guitar Gabby represents Black Women on guitar. Following in the footsteps of rock 'n' roll mothers such as Sister Rosetta Tharpe, she paves the way for the current and upcoming generation to step out and create their own paths in this industry. @guitargabby

Vanessa Izabella is a professional guitarist that started playing music at a young age. Progressing through high school, Vanessa was playing and performing on multiple instruments, including guitar, piano, and trumpet. She was awarded a scholarship to attend Berklee College of Music in Boston, MA. During her time there, she studied the guitar playing of such influences as Pat Martino, Slash, Pat Metheny, John Scofield, Eric Johnson, and many others. After graduating with a degree in Music Business, she went on to work with such artists as Pat Metheny and Christian McBride. Vanessa has traveled the world playing guitar, visiting countries such as France, Germany, Egypt, Italy, Japan, South America, and the Caribbean. She has performed on the bill with such renowned artists as Darius Rucker, LA Sno, KISS, Skid Row Paramore, and Joan Jett. She is currently recording and performing as the frontwoman for rock trio, BAST. vanessaizabella.com

Lynnay Della Lucé was born in Morristown, NJ, and raised in northern New Jersey. In 2009, she came to Atlanta to pursue better music and job opportunities and quickly made a name for herself in the local scene. She is a multi-instrumentalist playing guitar, bass, and drums, as well as a singer and songwriter. Her past projects include Chaos, Rocket 88, Project X, and Ballbreakers (Atlanta's All-Female AC/DC Tribute). lynnaymusic.com

Steve McKinley is the bass player for Joel Kosche (of Collective Soul) in his solo band and for the Led Zeppelin tribute Led Zepplified. He's been part of the Atlanta music scene for years playing in bands (i.e., Julius Pleaser, Sid Vicious Experience, Pretty Vacant, et al.). He has recorded and toured throughout the Southeast. His songs have been played on the radio, he has appeared on television, and is an ASCAP member. With his electronics skills and experience, he runs Atlanta Tube Amp and Steve McKinley Electronics and is an Instructor on JamPlay.com. He roots for Atlanta United, works on cars, and drinks his coffee strong, hot, and black. stevemckinleyelectronics.com

Nikki O'Neill is an Americana singer, guitar player, and songwriter with a deep love for soul music. Her records have been played on many blues and roots music stations in the US, Canada, and the UK Based in Los Angeles, she performs actively with her band. nikkioneill.com

Caroline Paone is a freelance music journalist. Her work has appeared in Bass Player, Guitar Player, ROCKRGRL, and Bass Frontiers magazines along with websites Classic Rock Revisited and SFGate. @CarolineRex

Mandy Rowden: Brought up in East Texas, Mandy Rowden has been a practicing musician since the tender age of six, when she began learning classical piano and guitar. In 2007, she founded Girl Guitar, a comprehensive rock and roll and songwriting school for women. A lifelong musician, multi-instrumentalist, and educator, Mandy is based in Austin, Texas, where she writes, records, performs, and teaches. girlguitaraustin.com

Victoria Shaffer's shockingly old soul explains her obsession with music history and passion for classic rock 'n' roll. As a student, Victoria graduated with a degree in English and is currently pursuing a master's to continue her growth as a writer. She strives to successfully combine her two obsessions by writing about the musicians and musical events that motivate and inspire her.

Kirk Stauffer is a Seattle-based photographer who has two passions—live music and photography. Over ten years ago, he began to combine them and has covered nearly 2000 performances to date. His photos have been published commercially, featured in Rolling Stone magazine, and one found itself on the front cover of Pollstar magazine. Kirk has been a contributing photographer for Paste Magazine, LiveDaily, No Depression and Back Beat Seattle, and is a regular SXSW attendee. Kirk Stauffer Photography

Alex Windsor is a passionate musician and educator with over sixteen years of experience. While she holds a Bachelor of Arts in Music with an emphasis in Jazz Studies (Bass), she has also extensively studied rock, blues, and classical guitar. She currently serves as the Educational Affairs Specialist for Guitar Center Lessons. Alex can be found regularly performing around the greater Los Angeles area. alexnicolewindsor.com

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